



Good practices of volunteering for European cultural heritage



Good practices of volunteering for European cultural heritage

aspects · perspectives · examples

Heritage and volunteers

We all have our own stories about how heritage revealed itself to us and became a major influence in our daily activities. Some of us see it as a hobby, some as a professional or academic career, some just as a joy of living a diverse and interesting life. The importance of heritage struck me when I took over the care of my grandfather's birthplace – a traditional farmhouse, which needed repairs and new lease on life. From the simple improvement of my own property's condition came the need for new education, and later even a career. By now, heritage has taken over my entire attention.

Many people are inspired by heritage, but many stay indifferent to the lure of past as well. I've heard people saying that there are three kinds of humans: those who see, those who see when shown and those who do not see at all. The beauty and essence of heritage reveals itself slowly. Not everybody has the patience to learn how to see. But in order to get more people engaged, we need those who see and can show others – stewards and interpreters of heritage, such as the volunteers or just proud owners and caretakers of sites and monuments are irreplaceable.

In ever-expanding discussion on what heritage is, Laurajane Smith, an Australian archaeologist and researcher on heritage and identity, has said that: "... heritage had to be experienced for it to

be heritage and that, moreover, it was the experience". The biggest additional value of volunteering is this deep personal experience, which is more extensive than just spectator's position. Getting involved makes experiencing heritage a hundred times more fun and meaningful.

For the past three years, local community members with the help of professionals and tens of volunteers have restored the roof and towers of Lalsi church in rural Estonia. The whole congregation is just one elderly woman nicknamed Marta of Lalsi. Her vigour and vision for preserving her heritage have inspired so many. Her presence adds an intangible, spiritual layer to the very tangible, material preservation work. It's impossible to calculate a monetary value for the man-hours and materials that volunteers and sponsors have put into the project. The true value of this work is way higher and includes the experience that tens of volunteers, including non-believers, have gained from that church. It is not just the new skills learned or the roofs fixed, but the life experience. Doing good is the best you can do for yourself.

It is only through active participation and engagement that the spirit of the Faro convention can become alive; only then we participate in the defining and managing cultural heritage. Our quality of life can benefit from heritage even if

we enjoy it in a passive way, but without our action the heritage will not benefit. People-centred heritage needs people in it.

Heritage as a civil society movement played key role in Estonia some thirty years ago in the process of restoring independence – it represented free-thinking and producing the memory of an ideal past, but also of an ideal future. Culture and cultural heritage were the main reasons and justifications for national self-determination, sources of hope and change. The momentum and sentiment have pretty much dissolved by now. In a way, we have to re-discover heritage and its role. And again, it proves that heritage is first and foremost a process – never-ending, ever-changing – which bears the face of those who act.

Every country in Europe has some heritage either directly at risk or at risk of being forgotten. Volunteers can be the godparents; caretakers of not only the sites but of the memory. Heritage is not about stones, coins or murals, it is only about memory and identity – where we come from and who we are. People, who answer the question "Who are you?" with "I'm a heritage volunteer", are my favourite people.

■ *Süim Raie*
Director General
National Heritage Board of Estonia



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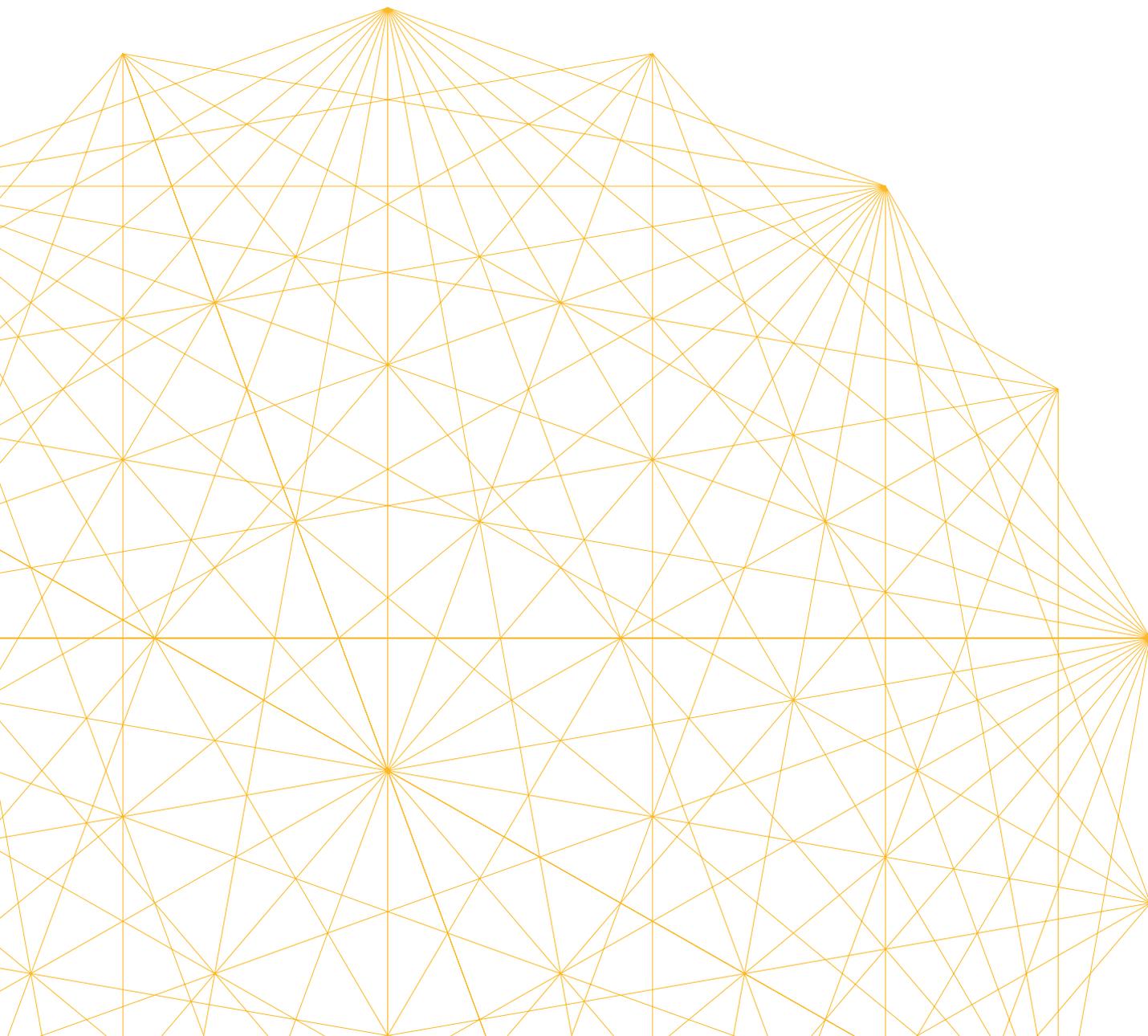
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Participation in cultural heritage means actively shaping it The European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 in Germany

How can the rich cultural heritage of Europe be passed on to younger generations, how can the desire to discover be awakened? How can I recognise myself, something from my everyday life, and from my own history in the architectural and archaeological cultural heritage that surrounds me in a changing society? Participation around cultural heritage does not only mean passive communication, but particularly active participation, preservation and dissemination.

For this reason, during the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 – also by the European Heritage Volunteers – collaborative, cross-border activities had been started that enabled exchange and dialogue from different perspectives with the greatest possible visibility.

This corresponded exactly to the approach of the European Year of Cultural Heritage and the motto used in Germany “SHARING HERITAGE – become part and share!”. The motto was a friendly invitation – an invitation to participate, to engage, to participate

in wider society and to work together in the European neighbourhood.

By no means is this motto only aimed at the European level, but of course also at the challenges of social cohesion within the country. Cultural wealth also offers us a lot more basis for intercultural dialogue: How can an inclusive concept of home country be designed? Which bridges are feasible here? How can I make this European way more tangible and transmit it?

Cultural heritage is a topic of the future. Our cultural inheritance is the key to our future as a society and economy. Preserving our heritage is a challenge that can only be met through a new focus on people, innovations, technology and new structures. It is a creative task that also requires the acquisition of new identifications with history and new stories. Every learner – therefore every person – knows how important direct, concrete impulses and experiences are. Historical places, such as monuments, enforce these unique experiences. That is why the most important task of cultural heritage

education in the pedagogical sense is not just the next routine tour through the castle, but the preservation of the monument in an attractive condition and the free discussion, an exchange that should never end.

Volunteering is a key instrument for this. The key here is the development of extra-curricular opportunities for young professionals in the field of cultural heritage and the establishment of cooperation between institutions and organisations from numerous European countries that are active in this field. The networking of civil society initiatives in the field of cultural heritage, particularly with a focus on the engagement of young people, enables the continuation of such successful initiatives as those of European Heritage Volunteers.

In cooperation with civil associations, foundations, offices, companies and science, a number of very different projects have therefore arisen as part of the European Year of Cultural Heritage. The main part of the funded projects and actions in the European



Year of Cultural Heritage year was aimed at a young audience. For several well-known German cultural institutions, such as the German Cultural Council, the Goethe Institute, the Cultural Foundation of the German Federal States and the Federal Baukultur Foundation, the German Cultural Heritage Committee was a technically relevant contact here.

An impressive example of good networking throughout society and a broad impact is the *#RinginTheBells* campaign, which occurred on International Peace Day, September 21, 2018, and again in 2019. Thousands of bells from over 700 participating institutions rang out in at least twelve European countries. Institutions included entire cities, community groups and many prominent churches such as San Marco in Venice and the Cathedral of Valencia. The bell tower next to the Federal Chancellery in the Berlin Tiergarten played the “Ode to Joy”, and the bells of the Berlin Cathedral rang as well. European Heritage Volunteers also took part in *#RinginTheBells* in several places in Germany, as well as in other European countries. Across Europe, there was a wide range of reports, enthusiastic partners and the necessary stimulus for discussion in order to highlight Europe’s cultural heritage by ringing the bells on International Peace Day.

The Cultural Heritage Education Network of the German Cultural Heritage

Committee accompanied the processes of the European Year of Cultural Heritage and drew up a balance sheet with conclusions and recommendations for successful cultural heritage education. With “young heirs” – children, adolescents and young adults – as the core target group, many projects from the beginning have been focused on increasing their visibility, engaging their participation and facilitating their involvement from the start. Young people are heirs to the inheritance. They will soon be responsible for ensuring that the testimonies of the past and the history and stories of places of remembrance are preserved for future generations. But they will also be the ones who direct the change in our coexistence on the European continent. As part of the European Year of Cultural Heritage, offers were created that inspired children and young people to share cultural heritage and European dialogue.

Through the exchange at framework events and especially through the work of projects and networks, common perspectives are achieved and a new, broader understanding of what meaning and what value cultural heritage currently has, and how this can be conveyed through integrative approaches. It can already be said that the entire cultural heritage discourse – particularly in its cross-border dimension – has received greater attention at a national and European level through the work of the

German Cultural Heritage Committee since the start of the European Year of Cultural Heritage, and has become more central within societal debates.

The European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 was a complete success: 37 European countries took part in this extraordinary year; in Germany alone, there were more than 400 projects with hundreds of thousands of visitors under the motto “SHARING HERITAGE”. We managed to make European cultural heritage more visible, to focus on what connects our common cultural roots and the cultural diversity of our continent at the same time. The results are now visible: many new visitors to monuments experience local stories in their European dimension. Hundreds of institutions have discovered new topics for themselves, developed new partnerships and worked with volunteers. In a way, this marks a new era for Europe’s cultural heritage after 2018.

The collaboration with the European Heritage Volunteers was extremely committed and successful in the context of the European Year of Cultural Heritage. We are very grateful for this and wish all players the best of luck for the further work to protect and convey the European cultural heritage.

■ *Uwe Koch*
Director of the German
Cultural Heritage Committee



The European Heritage Volunteers Programme

At first glance, it seems very natural and easy: on one side there are heritage sites which are in need of support or even in danger, and on the other side there are people who want to contribute to the conservation of cultural heritage and thereby to learn – so one matches both needs together and will achieve a wonderful result.

But when it comes to implementation, the issue is much more difficult, much more multilayered, much more complex.

Heritage sites are very different, often a heritage site does not stand isolated; it is embedded in an urban or rural structure, often linked with the surrounding natural environment, and it is a part of a community with a particular social structure and economic needs, often with other priorities than heritage-related ones.

Indeed, first and foremost, it is about people – people at the place, as well as those from outside, who want to contribute. The local population might have significantly decreased or is aging; or the opposite – a formerly quiet place might have become a hotspot. The heritage site may have lost its original purpose, has another use or is out of use; the owner might not be interested in its preservation or might be interested to adapt the use of the site and

therefore to change its original form. The local administration might be interested in its conservation, might set other priorities not compatible with a professional heritage-linked approach or might totally ignore the site.

And also those who want to contribute to the conservation and the revitalisation of a heritage site have diverse backgrounds, diverse motivations, diverse expectations. Some are in their sixties or retired, others are students; some want to engage with their local heritage, others want to explore far away heritage sites; some want to practically support cultural heritage in their field of expertise, others want to widen their knowledge. As many different situations exist, so do many different approaches, concepts and examples of volunteering for heritage.

The European Heritage Volunteers Programme focuses on a special constellation: it brings together stakeholders engaged in a particular heritage site with young heritage professionals from all over Europe and beyond for two-week projects, thus jointly contributing to the rescue, conservation and revitalisation of a particular heritage site.

The stakeholders may be national or regional heritage administrations, local authorities, universities, bigger non-

governmental organisations or smaller local associations, all with a high level of dedication and an above-average voluntary engagement for heritage.

The young heritage professionals are mostly aged between 22 and 32 years, almost all with a heritage-related academic education, and most of them searching for hands-on experience in direct contact with a heritage site.

The projects offer relevant practical support for the particular heritage site – in documentation, interpretation, conservation, restoration or other fields. At the same time, they provide the optimal frame for the connection of theory and practice, for interdisciplinary exchange and for the transmission of traditional techniques to the younger generation. The projects are bridges between different generations, between rural and urban environment and between people with different cultural backgrounds.

Although, the most important outcome is not necessarily the practical results and the learning effects for the participants, but the fact that the projects put a spotlight on overlooked or neglected heritage sites and their value. In addition, the voluntarily contribution of young heritage professionals from all over Europe and beyond mirrors the engagement of local heritage activists

to the local population and to local and regional administrations, thus supporting their efforts not only directly, but also indirectly on a mid-term basis.

If well designed, prepared, and implemented, heritage volunteering projects as practised within the European Heritage Volunteers Programme can be an appropriate means of intervention at heritage sites. Nevertheless, they are not a solution for every heritage site, for every occasion, nor for every intervention needed.

The core challenge for a successful heritage volunteering project is the selection of tasks. They should be interesting, at the same time not require too specialised skills from the outset, and also manageable concerning their amount. They should involve a certain number of participants in tasks of equal or similar interest and should enable groups of people to work in parallel. The task should not depend on external factors which cannot be influenced, nor should the construction process be too complex or tense overall at the particular site involving too many outside parties. Neither should tasks require technologically determined wait times, such as drying or hardening processes. Also, security risks should not be involved in the work. Last but not least, the task should have a visible result – taking into account both the satisfaction of the participants as well as the created public awareness.

When considering all these aspects, plenty of appropriate tasks remain for heritage volunteering projects. The most common ones may be traditional handicraft-oriented projects – in carpentry, joinery, masonry, as well as in rarer handicrafts. When well designed, pure conservation and restoration works are also appropriate tasks. Archaeology is a field where the involvement of volunteers has been widespread for a long time. Historic parks and gardens, as well as the natural surroundings of cultural heritage sites, are an optimal environment for first-time projects since they enable comparably easy, manageable interventions. Besides those main fields of interventions, there are a lot of others – documentation, interpretation, archival work, and the very wide and diverse field of intangible heritage.

Usually, the European Heritage Volunteers Projects bring together twelve to sixteen young heritage professionals from as many different countries of origin as possible and with different heritage-related professional backgrounds; the percentage of participants from the country where the project takes place differs depending on the wishes of the project partner. Two of the participants are group coordinators – former participants of the European Heritage Volunteers Programme who received additional training and are responsible for the implementation of the schedule and the social and intercultural aspects of the project.

Participants work six hours a day in two groups of about six to eight persons each, under the guidance of a technical instructor. At the hands-on projects, the instructors are masters in handicraft or experienced craftsmen; at projects with other topics, they have the needed qualification – architects, archaeologists, restorers, museologists and others. The technical instructors are provided either by the project partner, its umbrella organisation, European Heritage Volunteers, or another project partner from the European Heritage Volunteers network.

The programme is completed by theoretical education which goes much beyond the provided hands-on skills. The educational part includes lectures and site visits and provides background knowledge about the particular heritage site – its history, heritage value and the challenges in its conservation and revitalisation. Participants are also taught about the applied methodology, the techniques and materials used, as well as other aspects of tangible and intangible heritage of the region. The programme is rounded out by a day-long excursion to other heritage sites in the region.

In order to raise awareness among the local population as well as to stimulate the interdisciplinary exchange among the group, a public presentation is held in which every participant presents a heritage site from his or her country

that is comparable to that of the project or to the challenges the heritage site faces, according to a theme agreed upon beforehand with the project partner.

The projects take place between March and December with a focus on July, August and September. The overall schedule is designed in a modular system that enables interested young professionals to participate consecutively in several projects which are linked thematically or geographically.

Most of the projects are recurrent – some take place every year, others in a biennial rhythm – in some cases running uninterrupted for over a decade. Some projects are organised with the same local project partner, others within the frame of a longer-lasting collaboration with a main partner in the particular country or region, who identifies one or more heritage sites each season and undertakes the organisation with the particular local or regional partners.

Some of the projects are – besides being part of the European Heritage Volunteers Programme – also part of a heritage education programme of the particular project partner. This concerns mostly national heritage institutions or bigger organisations who serve in their countries or region as a focal point for heritage education or an umbrella structure for smaller associations. Often, these institutions have their

own tradition in heritage education or heritage volunteering aimed at national volunteers, and their integration in the European Heritage Volunteers Programme enables them to add an international aspect.

Each November, all partners meet at the European Heritage Volunteers Project Partners Meeting to evaluate the previous year's programme, exchange experiences, discuss new developments, develop qualitative standards and plan the programme of the following year. Afterwards the project partners develop the particular projects in detail. The project descriptions are published in February, and the participants can apply from March on; on average there are four to five times more applicants than places. European Heritage Volunteers selects applicants with high dedication to heritage in general and a special interest in the particular project, but also considers other aspects, such as a mixture of countries of origin or residence and professional backgrounds when composing the groups.

At the beginning of the main season in mid-July, the Group Coordinators Training Seminar is held, bringing together all those who will be group coordinators in the upcoming season. The seminar aims to provide the future group coordinators insight into the European Heritage Volunteers Programme, prepare them for their

task, provide them with helpful tools and underline the specifics of the particular projects.

In addition, Training Seminars for technical instructors are held to raise the instructors' awareness for the special target group of academically well-educated young heritage professionals with limited practical skills, but a high desire to learn. Other aspects of volunteering projects are brought to their attention, such as the optimal amount of work, the technical and technological manageability, the division of working groups, the correlation of theoretical input and practical training, and more.

The year's programme concludes with the annual conference "Volunteering for European cultural heritage", which is usually linked with the Project Partners Meeting. Every other year, the conference is included in the European Fair for Conservation, Restoration and Old Building Renovation "*denkmal*" in Leipzig. In other years, it is held in different countries, in collaboration with the respective national heritage institutions, with the aim to stimulate the exchange between these countries and regions of Europe and the European Heritage Volunteers Programme regarding traditions and practices of heritage volunteering and heritage education.

■ Bert Ludwig
Director
of European Heritage Volunteers



HERITAGE PERSPECTIVES



AWARENESS

Cultural heritage planning workshops as tools for awareness raising

Since 2017, the non-profit organisation “Culture Hub Croatia – Platform for Education, Creativity and Development through Culture” has implemented international documentation and interpretation workshops in partnership with European Heritage Volunteers.

The aim of Culture Hub Croatia is to share knowledge and collaborate in the field of culture at national and international levels to contribute to the development of local communities in Croatia. Partnering with the European Heritage Volunteers seemed like a logical choice from the very start – not only as a means of cultural heritage conservation and valorisation, but also as part of a community-building strategy. The methodology, based on the participatory approach and co-creation, proved to be very successful in these last three years. Culture Hub Croatia acts as a national focal point, connecting local activists, associations, educational institutions, municipalities and other actors with European Heritage Volunteers. Each year, a call for proposals is published at the national level and the location of the workshop is selected on the basis of the relevance of the proposed topic and the impact that the workshop might have for the local community. Culture Hub Croatia assists the local partners throughout the process by helping define the methodology, main aims, objectives and the programme prior to

the workshop and by coordinating and facilitating the workshop in its implementation phase. Finally, they take care of the reporting, dedicating special attention to the sustainability aspect of the project and allowing for proposals to be used or improved upon by the local partners and the community. Therefore, the objective to raise the awareness is one of the most important aspects and the added value of the workshops.



In 2017, the project “Revitalisation of the two towers” took place in Kaštela, in partnership with the Municipality of Kaštela. The participants worked on the concept for the sustainable use of the two monuments in ownership of the city, spread out in the area of the seven smaller settlements that are forming the city of Kaštela. One of the towers was very well restored but empty, without clear function, and the other one, the tower *Lodi*, in worse shape, being used by a boxing club. The main objective of

the project was to reflect on potential sustainable use of the towers, not only through the potential of the buildings themselves, but through their integration in the surrounding environment considered as a whole.

To do so, the participants analysed the sites’ strengths and limitations, which also included reaching out to the local community and asking them about this neglected heritage. Many of them didn’t know much about the history of the monuments, but they had many stories to share. They even invited participants into their homes and showed them interesting examples of photographic documentation. This particular experience gave the participants the idea to use the tower *Lodi*, situated in a small fishing port, as a space that could enable everyone to come and share their personal historical photos. In this way, not only would the tower itself be valorised by the community, but also the local fishing tradition and the personal stories of the inhabitants.

In 2018, the project took place in Rijeka on the topic of “Innovative interpretation of industrial heritage”. Two sites, in the ownership of the City, were selected: the former Sugar Refinery Palace situated in the *Rikard Benčić Complex* and the motor ship *Galeb* that will be both used as part of the City Museum of Rijeka.

The practical work was focused on the two locations and during the two-week period, the participants developed, under professional guidance, a proposal for good-quality interpretation of the two monuments – adapted to their context, historical role, actual function and potential users. The presence of international volunteers and the exchange of experiences were also relevant for the active involvement of the local population in the process of valorisation. They also assisted in raising awareness about the potential of the industrial heritage and the role it plays in fostering sustainable cultural tourism and development of the local community. Several public events were organised within the framework of the workshop, which allowed local students to get more involved in the development and brainstorming of the solutions together with the project participants. The proposals for the interpretation of both sites largely incorporated the community aspect:



from using the ship *Galeb* to share knowledge between generations, to ensuring that the needs and habits of the locals are integrated into the future renovation of the *Rikard Benčić Complex*.

Finally, in 2019, the project “Mapping and documentation of industrial heritage” was organised in Ivanić-Grad in collaboration with the local association “Friends of Heritage”. The programme was shaped to accommodate the challenges that the local community faces in the conservation of this important kind of heritage. The city’s industrial heritage faces several obstacles: disappeared industrial heritage, abandoned industrial buildings and the active industry still very relevant for the economic development of the city. For the first time in Ivanić-Grad, the European Heritage Volunteers Project addressed the issue of the lack of documentation and valorisation of industrial heritage.

The work consisted of material research and documentation in the archives and architectural mapping and analysis of relevant buildings in the central and industrial zones of the city. It resulted with the documentation of over three hundred items in the archives and the analysis of eighteen buildings. The project made industrial heritage more visible and accessible by providing coherent information about these buildings based on research and documentation. In addition, in order to involve the local population and make use of their

valuable knowledge and memories, interviews with several former workers of these companies were conducted in order to discover the social aspect of industrial heritage and get a more comprehensive overview of how the industry has influenced everyday life in Ivanić-Grad.

As usual in the framework of these documentation and interpretation workshops, community events were organised to share examples of good practice from the participants’ countries, inspire the local inhabitants, share ideas and present the results. In summary, the project provided the initial systematic overview of industry development in Ivanić-Grad, and through storytelling, helped raise awareness about the importance of conserving industrial heritage, continuing the work and using it as a resource. The results of the project – as with the other European Heritage Volunteers Projects in Croatia – are available in detailed reports on our website. The concrete outcomes of the project in Ivanić-Grad – the prototype for the website and the materials collected – are the basis for the future valorisation and sustainable management of industrial heritage. At a later stage, the local partner organisation “Friends of Heritage” will use these results to initiate a virtual museum – an online tool that enables the entire community to participate by directly uploading their personal archives, as photographs, objects, and documents.



The European Heritage Volunteers Projects not only generate interesting outcomes and results for the local actors in heritage, but they also gather motivated participants from all over the world. Despite their different backgrounds and experiences, all of them come together and are eager to contribute to the project. This is successful precisely because the team is always composed of young professionals specialised in different fields – from architecture, art history and cultural heritage management to sociology and other relevant disciplines – and all of them offer their different points of views on the topic. This makes the projects become very interdisciplinary but also quite interesting and intriguing for the locals.

The presence of the volunteers from all over the world in smaller local communities raises awareness of the inhabitants who often do not perceive their heritage as valuable or do not consider it as a potential resource, usually

taking it for granted. For this reason, the outreach aspect is integrated in Culture Hub Croatia's methodology. It consists of using the workshop as an opportunity to create community events such as "Open Doors Day", when every citizen can come meet the participants and actually contribute to shaping their proposals by offering feedback and sharing knowledge and experience. Participants also showcase examples of good practice from their countries through thematic presentations to a public audience. The final event is a crucial moment for presenting the results of the workshop to the local community, experts, and often, politicians. Therefore, these projects result in stronger engagement, visibility and potential influence on policy makers.

In the upcoming years we will continue to engage wide range of local stakeholders to become part of the European Heritage Volunteers Programme, especially targeting smaller communities to achieve a stronger impact and encourage even more participation of the local inhabitants. One of the main objectives for the future is to think of new ways of community engagement. It is precisely this awareness raising factor that can actually contribute to the sustainability of the projects, as it enables the local actors to become "carriers" of future activities in their local context.

■ *Marina Batinić*
Co-founder of Culture Hub Croatia



CONSERVATION

Conservation programme of Baroque furnishings

The Benedictine Abbey in Tyniec is a unique spot on the map of Poland. As the oldest preserved monastery, with a history dating back to the first half of the 11th century, it has been an important centre of spirituality and culture since the early days of the development of Polish statehood. Over the ages, it went through periods of prosperity and decline, until its dissolution in 1816 and re-opening in 1939. Today, rebuilt from ruins, it is open to guests wishing to experience the living Benedictine tradition. Its rich history and centuries-old tradition makes the Abbey, along with its museum, a unique place to encounter Polish history, culture and art.

The architectural complex of the Abbey combines Romanesque austerity with Gothic lightness and Baroque opulence. After the Second World War, Tyniec Abbey played an important role in the Polish Church – here, the initiative of translating the Bible from the original languages to Polish found its origin; here, the Polish translations of new liturgical books, introduced after the Second Vatican Council, were prepared. Today the monastery in Tyniec is open for pilgrims as well as for tourists, being a place of meeting and dialogue.

However, Tyniec is not just history but a living Benedictine community; it's the largest one in Poland, where the

daily rhythm is marked by the hours of prayers and work. By taking part in Vespers and Compline, one can listen to Gregorian chants, which have resounded in Tyniec every day unchanged for many years.

Therefore, to us, heritage does not only mean the past, but also the living present that is constantly being forged – the present that determines the kind of heritage we will leave to future generations. Thus, in the Tyniec Abbey we conserve the old walls and secure the artistic structure of the Abbey, but also actively promote the dissemination of heritage among various groups, from children to seniors. Our aim is for everyone to feel personally attached to the monuments that were preserved until our time and to feel shared responsibility for their further conservation.

For a number of years, we have been developing the idea of volunteering for heritage, in the belief that no lecture or presentation can result in a fuller understanding of the needs of monument protection than the hours spent inside the object and the work done for its conservation.

In 2018, we joined the European Heritage Volunteers network. It allowed us to extend our programme from one- to two-week stays and focus mainly on practical work directly on site.



From the beginning, we had the idea to take advantage of the rich historic and artistic wealth of the Abbey. At the same time, we had some reservations related to the degree to which we could involve the volunteers in conservation works concerning such an important object placed under constant conservation supervision.

Eventually, two arguments prevailed. Firstly, almost all conservation workshops employ so-called “technicians” who lack a degree in conservation. Still, it is not a problem for them, after a short training, to perform many simpler works related to the process of the conservation of works of art. Secondly, a volunteer does not mean an amateur, but a person who works without remuneration. By all means, professionals also get involved in volunteering work and conservation students participate in the project in Tyniec every year.

Even so, in 2018 we approached this very cautiously and started with involving the volunteers in works related to a relatively safe and resistant material – stone. They worked at the Baroque main altar made of marble. The volunteers removed layers of dirt, wax, and paste to prepare the altar for further conservation. The work was monotonous and required patience – as most conservation tasks do –, but the volunteers did not fail. They did their job accurately and dutifully, and the result of their work was very tangible. Contrary to some concerns, they did not complain that it was boring. They were grateful for the opportunity to participate in the process of conservation of real historic objects and admitted that work of this nature allowed them to gain a better understanding of the conservators’ tasks.

Encouraged by that experience, in 2019 we decided to go a step further

and involve the volunteers in cleaning of Baroque wooden sculptures, altar fragments, and a painting from Saint Scholastica’s Chapel before their conservation. This work required gentleness and precision, but the result once again exceeded our expectations. The volunteers were fully aware that they were handling vulnerable and valuable objects and worked with all their heart – both very accurately and effectively. The final results of their work were no different than those that would have been obtained in a professional conservator’s workshop. Both the sculptures and the painting were prepared for further conservation. At the end of 2019, after supplementary works and aesthetic conservation, they returned to their place in the church, where they can be admired by all the visitors of the Tyniec Abbey.

The works were obviously preceded by conservators’ lectures, so that the participants would be able to understand the whole conservation process and not only its small part in which they were directly involved. The work was carried out under the supervision of conservators, which ensured the safety of the objects as well as enabled the participants to ask questions and consult their actions on an ongoing basis.

An important aspect of the European Heritage Volunteers Projects is their inclusion into the Abbey’s Church

long-term conservation programme. We do not act randomly, selecting ad hoc tasks that are fit to be entrusted to volunteers. In our multi-year plan of complex conservation of the Baroque furnishings of the church, we select in advance the actions that the volunteers will be involved in. Thus, we create a schedule of conservation works in such a way as to include the projects. In this way, the European Heritage Volunteers Projects become a part of a greater whole. As a result, the works benefit the volunteers, who are able to work directly with artistic works and to learn a lot, as well as the objects themselves as these works would have to be carried out anyway.

We are looking forward to continuing these activities in the future, since our previous experience leaves no room for doubt that appropriately prepared volunteers can be safely involved in working with valuable historic objects and that it benefits both the volunteers and the objects entrusted to them. At the same time, people who devoted two weeks of their vacation to help in heritage conservation become the best cultural heritage ambassadors who understand both the need to protect historic objects as well as the challenges within this process.

■ *Marta Sztwiertnia*
Cultural manager
at Fundacja Chronić Dobro



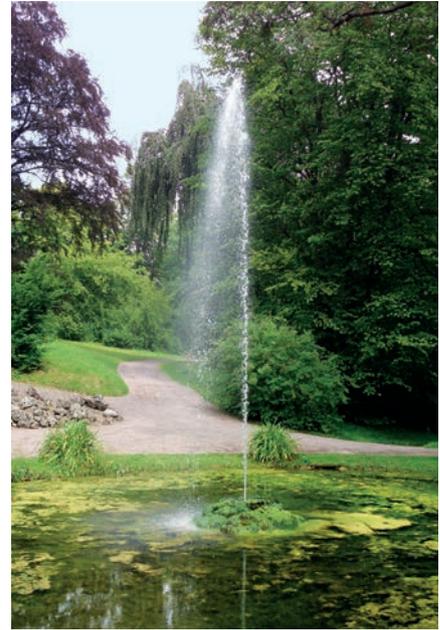
CONTINUITY

A decade of volunteers' engagement at parks and gardens in Weimar

Historic parks and gardens are works of art that convey images of contrived nature while also revealing much about the human will to create. In historic parks and gardens, we can read the history of different forms of rulership such as Absolutism and Enlightenment, as well as the tradition of horticultural maintenance, as if from a book. This, for example, can be traced through historic techniques of planting and pruning or the different use of meadows.

Historic parks and gardens require continuous maintenance. They are subjected to the changing seasons and to the natural life cycle of their vegetal substance. Horticultural maintenance, therefore, includes the mowing of

lawns and meadows, the planting and care of annuals and perennials for ornamental plantings, and the long-term maintenance and further development of present trees and shrubs. The parks of the public castles' administrations in Germany mostly can rely on a relatively high continuity in maintenance. In places where state park administration replaced courtly administration – following the First World War, the revolution, and the expropriation of noble properties during the Weimar Republic – maintenance traditions continued to be carried out despite funding restrictions. Otto Sckell (1861–1948) must be mentioned as representative of this tradition in the parks and gardens of Weimar. Initially, Sckell



worked as court gardener of the Saxon Weimar Grand Duchy, and after 1918 he became responsible for the parks and gardens as a state garden inspector. Thus, his work is an example of the continuity necessary in the maintenance of the horticultural works of art that entrusted to him, at a time when only few people thought about the importance of heritage conservation.

A sufficient number of employees and adequate funding are basic requirements for the long-term horticultural conservation of parks. These requirements should be met by an institution

that looks after a World Heritage site. The question arises as to whether or not a site dependent on the continuity of maintenance is well served in this goal by the largely temporary involvement of volunteers. The question looms larger under the pressures of increased site use and the challenges of climate change.

Assessing the experience of almost a decade of voluntary work in the parks and gardens of the *Klassik Stiftung Weimar*, the answer to the question clearly is “yes.” The exemplary work by the European Heritage Volunteers in Weimar confirms this. During recent years, the yearly two-week work deployment of fourteen volunteers in the parks of the *Klassik Stiftung Weimar* has become a continuous and reliable factor. Besides supporting the permanently employed gardeners, for instance, in meadow and path-maintenance, the volunteers have helped to



continue work on two specific projects: the restoration of original paths and the consolidation of historic dry walls in the Belvedere Castle Park.

Two conditions of these projects must be especially emphasised. On one hand, this additional work cannot be carried out as part of the regular maintenance because of the limited number of personnel on the staff. On the other hand, the work can hardly be tendered to landscaping companies because it demands a high degree of manual work as well as sensitivity in carrying it out.

Moreover, the cooperation with European Heritage Volunteers naturally fits with the education and outreach role of

the *Klassik Stiftung Weimar*: It promotes learning since the participants get to know a major German cultural institution and gain insight into conservation strategies and the practical work of the gardening department. Moreover, by working collegially alongside the gardeners of the *Klassik Stiftung Weimar*, they gain personal insights into working and living conditions in Germany and vice versa. The volunteers report on personal experiences in their home countries, creating an active mutual exchange, the more so because the participants offer public presentations about UNESCO World Heritage sites located in their home countries, including potentials and challenges in their management.



Essential conservation terminology and working methods are explained through practical work. Among the topics addressed are different kinds of maps, such as planning and inventory maps, the laying out of trenches and digs, the designation and significance of findings, superimpositions, the participating institutions and authorities, and the practices of permitting in conservation work.

While restoring historic paths, the volunteers succeeded again and again in re-establishing small sections of paths. These paths had disappeared entirely under a layer of humus or sod. Through tedious manual labour, the former courses of paths were exposed, the accumulated layers of dirt peeled off, and the new path construction was developed on top of the historic base layer. The participants were able to reconnect to the work of their predecessors time and again, so that in important sections, such as in the surroundings of the so-called *Big Grotto*, the complete network of paths successively reappeared, thereby significantly improving the spatial relations and views within the Belvedere Castle Park.

Concerning the securing of dry stone walls, the volunteers were able to stop the ongoing decline of a valuable enclosure wall of the Belvedere's former kitchen garden under the direction of an experienced mason. The salvaged rocks could be reused to repair collapsed wall

sections. In addition, historic steps were improved or replaced in the area leading to the kitchen garden. Here too, the historic path became evident and was then exposed and restored. This lay important groundwork for future conservation of the entire former kitchen garden. The primary goal of the interventions is to secure and delineate the spatial structure and construction before resuming any horticultural cultivation.

Corresponding media presentation could be used to communicate the current work to the public and raise interest in the conservation in progress.

In summary, it can be said that the work done by volunteers presents a very significant aspect even in a large, established institution such as the *Klassik Stiftung Weimar*. Additional work can be completed, and exemplary ways of restoration can often be identified. In addition, working with volunteers from different countries plays an important role in intercultural exchange and the transfer of knowledge.

■ *Andreas Pahl*
Garden officer
at *Klassik Stiftung Weimar*



LOCAL EMPOWERMENT

European Heritage Volunteers Projects – a catalyst for local empowerment

“The outstanding universal value of World Heritage sites is based on local values, local experiences and most importantly on local conservation efforts. World Heritage is not only the success story of heritage conservation efforts on a global scale, it is also a success story of local people and communities who make this global heritage possible.”
– *Mechtild Rössler*¹⁾

Local people are the true custodians of many heritage sites worldwide. Their key role in maintaining and managing heritage is unquestionable. In a World Heritage context, the role of local communities is acknowledged in paragraph 12 of the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention 2017, which encourages states parties at the Convention “...to ensure the participation of a wide variety of stakeholders, including site managers, local and regional governments, local communities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and other interested parties and partners in the identification, nomination and protection of World Heritage properties”. Furthermore, the enhancement of the role of communities was included as the fifth strategic objective for the implementation of the World Heritage Convention. Local stewardship of heritage has the capacity to empower communities. Therefore, the recognition of local communities as a key factor

in sustainable management of World Heritage sites is fundamental from the outset. It requires the identification of local people’s specific role in the protection and preservation of heritage sites and the determination of strategies for their involvement and empowerment.

Transboundary European heritage sites, such as the World Heritage sites “Muskauer Park/Park Mużakowski” (Germany/Poland) and the “Erzgebirge/Krušnohoří Mining Region” (Czechia/Germany) in particular, strengthen collective responsibility over shared heritage, and may contribute to peace-building through cultural cooperation. They are a visible and tangible witness of how people in Europe have created culture together, as well as community. Shared heritage has a high potential for fostering intercultural dialogue and cross-border cooperation.

Located in the Saxon-Bohemian Ore Mountains, the German-Czech World Heritage site Erzgebirge/Krušnohoří Mining Region can be considered an exemplar for community involvement beyond borders, and in rural regions. In addition to its historic mining heritage, the region has retained its comprehensive intangible heritage. Due to the property size, the World Heritage site encompasses a broad range of stakeholders, including mining associations as a key part of the local

community. As owners or managers, some associations are directly responsible for the conservation and presentation of historic mining sites. Others promote and support mining museums and visitor mines, for example by taking care of collections and exhibitions, setting-up of mining educational paths, or organising educational activities. From the outset, the aim of the Ore Mountains World Heritage nomination process was to create a shared responsibility and a shared understanding of the value of the mining heritage between all stakeholders across borders, as well as to encourage active participation of local people in the nomination process and future management of the site.

To better involve and empower the local community, an EU-funded transboundary project in the field of education and capacity building was set up to focus on the needs and expectations of the community. A primary aim was to more actively involve mining associations as a key part of the local community in World Heritage management issues. A key challenge identified was the advanced age of existing mining association members and the decreasing number of newcomers. The main objective of the project, therefore, was to develop strategies to motivate younger generations to become involved with such associations and actively protect their heritage.

Since 2017, European Heritage Volunteers Projects have taken place in the Ore Mountains Mining Region: in 2017 at the *VII. Lichtloch* mine in Halsbrücke and *Reiche Zeche* teaching and research mine in Freiberg; at *Wolfgang-maßen Fundgrube* mine in Schneeberg, *Schindlers Blaufarbenwerk* smalt works in Zschorlau, and *Alte Elisabeth* mine in Freiberg in 2018; and at the *Markus-Röhling-Stolln* mine in Annaberg-Buchholz in 2019.

Initiated by the Saxon World Heritage Coordination, they were organised together with the Institute of Industrial Archaeology, History of Science and

Technology at *TU Bergakademie Freiberg* and the association *Förderverein Montanregion Erzgebirge*, as well as regional and local partners. The projects covered different fields of work from maintenance work to underground clearing work, and archaeological research identified in close cooperation with the respective site manager. Evaluating the effects and the benefits of the European Heritage Volunteers Programme show that volunteering of young people can be considered as a catalyst for strengthening protection, communication and awareness-raising among the local population.

In particular, the main outcomes include:

Enhancement of cooperation

The local mining heritage touches a broad range of stakeholders who occasionally have conflicting interests. Volunteering provides a platform of dialogue between authorities and local people. Those engaged in the projects include technical advisers, site managers, local craftsmen and heritage authorities, as well as additional partners, such as local companies and town administrations.

Protection and valorisation of mining heritage sites

The lack of active members, time and financial constraints often delay the implementation of maintenance work. The projects facilitate the implementation of urgently needed security measures in a short timeframe. Moreover, they mobilise additional financial support of various local and regional sources. The high-quality work and the use of traditional materials contribute to long-term preservation and presentation.

Awareness-raising for specific mining-related craftsmanship

The authentic conservation of mining heritage requires specific techniques e.g. for specialised masonry and wood works. There is a need for action, particularly in training young craftsmen, as well as making specialised qualification more attractive for young craftsmen. The European Heritage Volunteers





the experiences made beyond borders and the benefits these projects can provide for the protection and presentation of the joint mining heritage.

The European Heritage Volunteers Projects are trend-setting projects that provide a look at heritage in the context of present use and future development. The projects directly address key stakeholders – the mining associations –, and the local community receives the direct benefits of the projects. At the same time, they provide valuable momentum for the development of local up-to-date projects to benefit future generations. The outcomes of the recent projects show that the European Heritage Volunteers Projects can bring multiple benefits and new motivation to community involvement, as well as local empowerment. In general, due to their very nature, these projects have the capacity to enhance intercultural exchange and dialogue between generations, increase the awareness of the importance of heritage sites, as well as provide a framework for local participation and engagement. In particular, they generate new impetuses for future actions to strengthen the support of voluntary structures among the local community and, in particular, to develop new ideas to motivate local young people to actively engage in the conservation and protection of their heritage.

■ *Friederike Hansell*
Saxon World Heritage Coordination

Projects highlight the importance of traditional craftsmanship and the potential for enhancing the local economy by creating sustainable professions that strengthen identification with the local mining heritage.

Recognition of the association's work

Awareness within the local community is a key requirement for the long-term sustainable protection of mining heritage. Volunteer structures provide the basis for the protection of this heritage until today. The European Heritage Volunteers Projects, related media interest and public events increase recognition of voluntary work among the local community. The active engagement of young people from all over the world for local mining heritage increases public interest. The cooperation with local partners and craftsmen fosters awareness for heritage protection among the local community.

New stimuli for local youth engagement and educational programmes aimed at the young generation

Engagement of young people in the long-term protection of the mining heritage is crucial. To motivate young people, particular conditions are required, as well as a certain degree of learning outcomes that increases their competencies and skills. The exchange and dialogue with international young adults provides new impetuses for up-to-date volunteer work, meeting the demands of younger generations. The projects serve as model for the development of follow-up projects for local people of different ages to strengthen volunteer structures in the region.

Transboundary cooperation

Considering the European character of the volunteering projects in the Erzgebirge/Krušnohoří Mining Region, next steps should consider the relevance of

TRANSMISSION OF KNOWLEDGE

The wooden building tradition of the North and challenges of maintaining it

Wood has practically always been amply available in the Nordic regions, which is why a great part of Nordic architectural heritage is built of wood. The variety of wood building techniques that have been used historically, especially in Scandinavia, bears witness to this: stave technique, post-and-plank technique, log building, timber framing and half-timbering in the southern-most areas. These are only the most prominent techniques.

Preservation of architectural heritage built of organic materials encompasses many challenges: how do we maintain valuable buildings that are prone to rot? The challenges are further increased by climate change. How do the warmer winters that we now have affect the ecology and conservation or decay of wooden buildings? Another challenge with the conservation techniques we already have is a change in human or cultural ecology. In the following text, I will focus on challenges in heritage work caused by changes in intangible culture.

During the second half of the 20th century, industrial construction techniques and materials became predominant, replacing a long-standing tradition of wood building. The vast need for rebuilding after the Second World War fuelled the pace of the technological development of construction

techniques. New professionals in construction are educated only in the use of prefabricated materials. Within two generations, the tradition and skill of log building was effectively marginalised and displaced. Skills that almost every man possessed in the first half of the 20th century have become exceedingly rare.

An overwhelming majority of older Finnish architecture is wooden. Stone was used only in cities, manors, and churches. As the traditional skills in wood construction began to dwindle, Finnish heritage professionals tried to develop new ways to preserve architectural monuments. New materials, such as im-pregnation chemicals, new insulation materials and latex paints were widely used in conservation work, and even recommended by officials in the 1970s and 1980s. These techniques and materials have almost exclusively proved to be failures, causing more harm than benefit.

Today, it is understood that the best way to preserve wooden monuments is to maintain and repair them using the original materials and techniques. It is also recognised that in order to be able to maintain and preserve such organic structures to the future, we must work to keep the skills and techniques of traditional building alive. Tangible heritage is dependent on intangible heritage.

Heritage work in Finland follows some unique patterns. The country has an old tradition of grassroots level local volunteer work, known as *talkoo*. In past centuries, schools, community halls, even churches have been built by local volunteers. As society underwent great changes during the post-war era, this form of voluntary activity was extended to local heritage work. Hundreds of local heritage associations formed to collect old memories of their communities or preserve old buildings as monuments. During a few decades, hundreds of small museums, completely run by volunteers, sprang up all around the country. Non-professional, grassroots level local heritage associations have many advantages in comparison to professional museums. They are also not necessarily bound to museum professionals' traditional focus on tangible collections. In fact, many local heritage associations have been enthusiastically working with intangible heritage decades before the professional field understood its importance.

One aspect of this is the preservation of the skills, knowledge and tools for maintaining their local wooden architecture. Some local, volunteer-run museums maintain a higher standard of historic accuracy in their buildings than even the largest professional open-air museums in the country. The volunteers have managed to preserve

traditional craftsmanship that is no longer relevant to professionals in the field of construction. However, these volunteers are usually from a generation who were at their most active in the 1970s and 1980s. Their skills need to be passed on to as many people as possible.



The Kauppila Farm Museum, located in Laitila in the province of Finland Proper is, as a heritage site, among the most valuable local museums in the country. The Kauppila farm was donated to the City of Laitila in 1971 and opened four years later as a museum. The main building of the farm complex forms an enclosed courtyard, a trait in vernacular building which was very common before the 18th century, but of which extremely few examples remain today. Kauppila is ranked as a cultural environment of national importance by the National Bureau of Antiquities, on the base of being “representative of wealthy southwest

Finnish vernacular architecture and one of the most well-preserved enclosed courtyards in Finland Proper”. The Kauppila complex consists of seventeen buildings in all, almost all of them built of wood. Most of the buildings are in log technique, which was the predominant way of building from the Iron Age up to the post-war period. A vast majority of the buildings of Kauppila have roofs of wood shingles between three and five millimetres thick, known in Finnish as *päre*. The technique of building thin shingle roofs was common from the late 19th until the mid-20th century. Such roofs are very common in local museums but pose a challenge, as the material has a fairly limited lifespan of approximately twenty to thirty years, and the skill to renew it is becoming increasingly scarce.

The main challenge regarding Kauppila is resources and local engagement. The City of Laitila, which owns the museum, pays carpenters to do some maintenance and repair work every year, but the sheer amount of buildings and organic building materials in the farm complex makes this a losing battle.

In 2019, a European Heritage Volunteers Project was arranged at Kauppila. One area of focus was on the transmission of traditional skills and understanding the meaning of traditional working methods when preserving heritage. The participants, coming from different parts of Europe, as well as Brazil, China

and India, got to learn Nordic traditional building skills, mostly using materials coming from the forest, as well as suitable traditional painting of wood surfaces.

The participants learned from work instructors Veikko Virkkunen and Sauli Nurminen. Virkkunen is a specialist in traditional wooden building techniques and has been working most of his career with heritage sites and privately owned historic wooden buildings. He has been teaching his skills to younger partners, such as Nurminen. Virkkunen and Nurminen formed a very effective teaching team; Nurminen is very skilled in English and was able to communicate well verbally with the volunteers, whereas Virkkunen had the role of the “master”. Knowing the traditional techniques in-depth, he taught more through practical demonstrations, and focused on the tasks requiring higher degrees of skill and understanding of the materials.



A deep understanding of the materials is especially important when working with wood. This does not only entail the qualities of different species of trees, but also how, where, and what time of the year the tree had been felled, how long the wood should be stored before working with it, how it should be handled to achieve certain qualities, and so on. Such aspects are central when working with spruce fences. The participants got to understand the process from the point of selecting suitable trees from the forest, cutting them down and processing them into functional parts of a fence. The trunks, once split in two, could be twisted into bindings to support and keep the other parts of the fence in place. For this a young spruce, which grew in a dark thicket must be selected for maximal softness and flexibility of the grain. The fence posts, again, had been felled the previous winter, to provide hardness and durability.

Almost all participants were either architects, or students or professionals in the heritage field. For almost all of them, it was the first time they were working with tools like axes or barking irons. Handling wooden materials for different purposes gives an increased understanding for the different characteristics of wood.

The characteristics of wood also play a key role in understanding why the traditional rye and water-based red

paint has become dominant in the north. With starch as a binder, the paint does not form a tight coating over the wood, but gets sucked into the grain, allowing the wooden surfaces to absorb and release moisture naturally, which increases their lifespan. The paint, consisting of rather inexpensive ingredients, has traditionally been home-cooked in large cauldrons or metal barrels and then applied steaming hot onto the walls. The participants were taught the entire process, starting with cooking the paint over an open fire.

On a short-term perspective, the European Heritage Volunteers Project seems to have had the effects we hoped for. Most of the participants were professionals or students in the heritage field and will hopefully benefit from the earned understanding of traditional Nordic wood architecture and associated skills. Although local volunteers did not take part in the transmission of skills in the project, it inspired locals to later take part in more *talkoo* events at Kauppila. This also reveals an important aspect of *talkoo*: *talkoo* events with many participants, both old and young, act as moments of transmission where traditional skills are disseminated for the common good.

■ *John Björkman*
Cultural heritage team leader
The Museum Centre of Turku
Regional Museum of Finland Proper



INTEGRATION IN WIDER CONCEPTS

The impact of cultural heritage conservation on a Biosphere Reserve

The International Council on Monuments and Sites refers to cultural heritage as: “An expression of the ways of living developed by a community and passed on from generation to generation including customs, practices, places, objects, artistic expressions, and values.”¹⁾ Thus, cultural heritage can never be seen independently, but rather linked closely with developments in society, religion, politics and governance forms, as well as with economy. These spheres have all shaped cultural heritage – and vice versa – they are often influenced by cultural heritage.

Naturally, a strong link exists between cultural heritage and the natural resources of a specific region. Climate, soils, geology, water and morphology of a site shape its specific cultural heritage by distinguishing its architecture, archaeology and its artefacts, such as books, documents, objects, and pictures.

European landscapes of today are the result of millennia of settlement history. Human influence on nature has been strong, and thus natural and cultural aspects go hand in hand.

Considering the aforementioned deep link between natural and cultural heritage, strategies for their protection, awareness-raising and revitalisation should be jointly developed and implemented, taking into account both

aspects of natural and cultural heritage. The transboundary Prespa region in the border area of Albania, Greece and North Macedonia, with its Transboundary Biosphere Reserve Ohrid-Prespa, is a good example of this close linkage between cultural and natural heritage.

Biosphere Reserves are no classical “Nature Conservation Areas” as one might assume from the name “reserve”. In contrast to the concept of National Parks, which focuses on protection of natural processes, the concept of Biosphere Reserves puts the interaction between people and nature at its centre. This corresponds to UNESCO’s “Man and the Biosphere” Programme, under which the world network of Biosphere Reserves is defined and promoted.

Thus, Biosphere Reserves usually protect natural and semi-natural ecosystems and landscapes rather than pristine nature, and aim at protection of natural and cultural diversity through three core functions:

Sustainable Development

Biosphere Reserves want to be model areas for ecologically and socio-culturally sustainable use of natural resources, i.e. by developing nature-based tourism, regional value chains of local production, and supporting a regional identity that is built on the natural values that the specific reserve entails.



Education and Communication

In order to make the public aware of the natural and cultural values of their region, environmental education, awareness-raising and communication play an important role in Biosphere Reserves.

Research and Monitoring

In support of the model character of the Biosphere Reserve regions, research and monitoring play an important role. Through applied research, the interlinkage between ecologic, social and economic factors is being studied, and used for future improvement of the best practices for sustainable development in the Biosphere Reserves.

The Transboundary Biosphere Reserve Ohrid-Prespa has been added to the worldwide list of Biosphere Reserves under UNESCO’s “Man and the Biosphere” Programme as a result of a

successful recognition process, based on application documents and good lobbying work supported by the German KfW Development Bank-financed project “Transboundary Biosphere Reserve Prespa – Phase I”. Ohrid-Prespa Transboundary Biosphere Reserve was established with a bilateral agreement between Albania and North Macedonia and recognised by UNESCO in 2014. The Albanian part comprises ten Protected Areas of different categories, which conserve the ecosystems of the ecologically interlinked Prespa and Ohrid Lakes. Their ecosystems and habitats form part of the wider Mediterranean global hotspot of biodiversity and are considered among the most important sites of fresh-

water biodiversity in Europe. They are of extraordinary importance for sedentary and migratory birds.

The Prespa and Ohrid region is equally rich in cultural heritage with a number of monuments stemming from pre-historic times to the Middle Ages.

One of the most important spots in Prespa region is Maligrad. Maligrad, which means “small town”, is an island situated within the Albanian part of Great Prespa Lake close to the shore of Pustec, the municipal center of the Great Prespa area in Albania.

The island, which measures approximately five hectares, is characterised by



a rocky cliff covered with tree and grass vegetation and a sandy shore. With its diverse characteristics, it is home to a number of endangered and endemic species, such as the bats and birds living in the caves, and the emblematic pelicans which rest there in spring. Due the importance of its biodiversity, the entire island is part of the strictly protected core zone of the Prespa National Park.

Thanks to its outstanding value, Maligrad receives more and more visitors each year. Local boatmen service the tourists on their trip from Pustec to the island.

However, Maligrad Island is also a unique site from a cultural heritage perspective. Prehistoric drawings on the rocky cliffs testify to the long history of settlements in the Prespa area, and ongoing archaeological excavations on the island may reveal more on the history of this spectacular place.





Furthermore, the island is home of the famous St. Mary Church, built in 1369 by Kesar Novak, a local noble, in a cave in the island's rocky cliff. With its 14th century frescos, this church is an important cultural monument administered by the Regional Directorate of National Culture Korça.

The Regional Administration for Protected Areas Korça and the Regional Directorate of National Culture both work on the effective conservation of this gemstone of Great Prespa Lake. By renovating the boat piers at the Pustec and Maligrad shores, fixing the access trail from the shore to the church,

restoring the church, and putting up information boards, they plan to make the island's cultural and natural heritage more accessible and attractive to visitors.

Support for these joint conservation efforts is offered by the European Heritage Volunteers and the Transboundary Biosphere Reserve Prespa project, a development project of the Republic of Albania, co-financed by the Federal Republic of Germany through KfW Development Bank.

The European Heritage Volunteers Project focuses on wood works and includes the conservation of the roof

construction and the roofing of the church, as well as improvement on the site's accessibility.

Financial and logistic backing for this initiative is available through the ongoing KfW-financed project "Transboundary Biosphere Reserve Prespa – Phase II". The project has two inter-related objectives: the reduction of pressure on natural resources and contribution to poverty reduction in the Albanian part of the Prespa Biosphere Reserve. This is to ensure the preservation of the biodiversity and to improve the living conditions of the population in Prespa National Park and in the Albanian part of the Transboundary Biosphere Reserve Ohrid-Prespa.

The joint conservation efforts of the natural and cultural heritage of Maligrad in general and the European Heritage Volunteers Project in particular, can be considered concrete activities that fill the Biosphere Reserve concept with life. Conserving the natural and cultural heritage, thereby attracting more visitors, lays a base for sustainable tourism and socio-economic development on a regional level, and establishes the area as a model region for environmentally and socially sound economic development.

■ *Constanze Schaaff*
Chief Technical Advisor
Transboundary Biosphere Reserve
Prespa development project



PARTICIPANTS' PERSPECTIVES



WIDENING PERSPECTIVES

Silent patients – What volunteering in conservation taught me about heritage

Volunteering gave me a glimpse into a hidden world of objects. I was an “outsider” to heritage work as a social researcher, though I was not unfamiliar with some issues surrounding it, coming from a material and visual anthropology background. I volunteered at the Univ Monastery in Ukraine, where we completed a conservation project on 17th and 18th-century tabernacles. This was not only a further introduction to the field of heritage, where I also got to tinker with objects which before I had only seen in museum displays. I also learnt about the material realities of artefacts and the science of taking care of them, which expanded my more previously theoretical understanding of heritage.

One of the first issues through which I gained a more in-depth understanding was the role of the material needs of objects in heritage work. As an anthropological researcher, I am mostly thinking of objects as “agents”. They are able to shape our lives. For instance, I analysed how the design of smartphones affects how we use them. It is from this perspective I approached heritage as well – I looked at how art and artefacts present certain social and cultural narratives. Through volunteering in conservation, I could see how history also physically shaped the artefacts. This highlighted a new set of issues for me when it comes to heritage – the

material needs of artefacts. During conservation work, I did not only have to think about what the tabernacles “meant” or “did”, but how they were affected by their changing environment over the centuries. I had to note down in detail the different forms of damage affecting their surface and think about the root of these problems in order to provide proper care for the objects.

This physical interaction with artefacts also made me recognise the role of (natural) science in preserving heritage. As one of my fellow volunteers described, we were doctors with patients who could not talk back. This seemed like an accurate description – we wore lab coats and went through copious amounts of cotton. Conservators leading our workshops knew exactly what chemical we needed to treat the objects just by taking a quick glance at them. This interaction with the artefacts also highlighted their precariousness; one incautious move could cause irreversible damage and changes to an object that had remained intact for over several centuries. As with any science, I also learnt about the ethics of conservation; particularly the careful considerations about the extent to which artefacts should be restored. I learnt about the biography of objects as an anthropologist, mostly focusing on their changing environment and “agency” over their lives. For instance, how their role changes from



a “tool” to an “artefact” after becoming part of a museum’s collection. However, through this practice, I recognised how the physical alterations, be it damages or reparations, are also a crucial part of their biographies which have to be thought about when working with them.

Volunteering at the Univ Monastery, I gained a quick but in-depth introduction to conservation, alongside people who are experts and highly passionate about this profession.

I may never become a professional restorer. Still, now whenever I work with objects, be it in a museum or elsewhere, I keep in mind not only how they shape us, but what they need from us to take care of them.

■ *Karen Kiss*

Learning from other countries and representing mine

As a professional architect, I embraced participation in the European Heritage Volunteers Programme as a good opportunity to further my profession, especially in the field of cultural heritage. The project encouraged me to learn more about the importance of heritage conservation, to obtain knowledge in traditional handicraft techniques, and to get to know the rich and multilayered history and architecture of Weimar.

The project I participated in took place in a part of Belvedere Park, at the 300-year-old surrounding wall and the former path system of the so-called kitchen garden. The main task was about rebuilding the old wall in the traditional way. The technique also had to be traditional, because interference with technology was forbidden legally and morally. So, we had to preserve that technique of reconstruction, and by preserving that technique we were preserving the wall, and by preserving the wall we were preserving the heritage, and by preserving the heritage we were preserving the history. With this project, I began my practical professional commitment and I confirmed the theory of professionals: that in order to deal with cultural heritage in general – with documentation, conservation and restoration – you must first be morally prepared, because interfering with such heritage resources is of particular historical importance.

Our technical instructor was stonemason Peter Trescher. His forty-plus years of experience, his working and communicative skills, and his knowledge made him a respected figure to all. When master Peter spoke, the way he posed questions and provided answers seemed not to be of a stonemason master, but an academic with many scientific degrees. Personally, I was very happy to have the opportunity to talk and work with him.

The project concluded successfully. A remarkable amount of the historic wall could be secured and restored; and the next year, other volunteers will continue as we did, until its completion.

The support of young professionals from different institutions for particular heritage sites is of great importance. Therefore, anyone who has the opportunity to participate in such project should use the opportunity to engage and become professionally and educationally trained. Such projects would enable us to open the way for the future, to find ourselves at a cultural site in need. In this way, we can culturally unite, and not only help each other all over Europe, but also in Asia, America, or Australia. Cultural heritage is something we all share, because it is human heritage sprinkled with spiritual heritage, so we have a moral and ethical but also a professional



obligation to this heritage, to this human reflection we have been expressing for centuries. I think there are cases like this everywhere in the world. Even in my own country, in Kosovo, where sadly, most traditional constructions are either half-ruined or completely lost.

I am thankful to European Heritage Volunteers, who provide the necessary structure and the organisational background to enable these projects, and to Kosovo Council of Cultural Heritage who supported my participation – as well as of several other students from Kosovo – in the European Heritage Volunteers Programme by overtaking our visa and travel costs, since most of us would otherwise not have been able to participate. This project also had great symbolic significance for me, since I could support the restoration of a UNESCO World Heritage site and – coming from Kosovo, which is not yet a member of UNESCO – within the framework of a public event, present my country's cultural heritage as the equal of the other countries participants presented.

■ *Korab Kraja*

East of Germany – two years, six projects, no regrets

I first heard about European Heritage Volunteers in 2017 when I met a representative of the organisation by sheer coincidence. I was a master student of Historical Urban Studies in Berlin and the most dreaded question that often came up when I told people what I was studying was: “And what are you going to do with a degree like that?” The truth was: I had absolutely no idea. But I was eager to find out, and joining European Heritage Volunteers seemed like the perfect way to start.

After a bachelor’s degree in art history and a couple of years working at a university, I was quite invested in a lot of the subjects I was dealing with – like urban development and social justice or how migration changes urban space –, but most of the time I felt that the academic field was too detached from the actual physical space it was talking about. The big exceptions had been two field trips, one to Istanbul, the other to Belgrade and Skopje. These were the times where everything I had learned started to come together and make sense: the urban and the rural, sociology and architecture, the cultural and the political. I especially enjoyed exploring those areas of Europe that were less represented in the Western media. Before going to Macedonia for the first time, I had no image of this small state in south-eastern Europe. But while spending time in Skopje, my

classmates and I made observations that taught us a lot about Europe’s history and cultural identity at large. I especially remember one sentence from the curriculum that I found strikingly true: that Europe might be better understood from its margins.

Accordingly, when it came to choose projects from the European Heritage Volunteers Programme of 2018, I decided to apply for three projects that would take me from Germany’s neighbour country Poland as far away as southern Serbia. As I had no practical experience in the heritage field whatsoever, I was excited to participate in three totally different types of projects – conservation work on an 18th-century altar, followed by restoration of a clay wall in a mountain village and finally urban planning in a port town. I stepped right into a radical learning experience with my first project: conservation of the Baroque altar at the Benedictine abbey’s church in Tyniec, Poland. Apart from overcoming the anxieties that came with working in conservation as an untrained person – What if I break something? Will anybody notice if I make a mistake? – I was confronted with a couple of prejudices I had towards life in a monastery. By living in the guest house of Tyniec monastery and working alongside some of its monks for two weeks, I was able to encounter a lifestyle so fundamentally

different from my own that it seemed anachronistic and reactionary to me at first. But the more time we spent with the monks, the more I learned that their way of life is changing and adapting constantly. Living in contemporary Europe, the Benedictine monks have incorporated a lot of very “normal” things into their everyday life, like shopping in the city, wearing jeans, and even managing a popular Facebook account. I was also impressed to learn how highly educated the monks were. Many of them were fluent in English as well as Italian, German or Hebrew – some spoke as many as six languages. The differences between their and our lifestyles were the perfect fuel for exchange.

The most remote place my journey led me to was Gostuša, a small village in the mountains of south-eastern Serbia, where we worked with endangered vernacular architecture. Because Gostuša is relatively hard to reach, the population still lives in close connection to the landscape. Gostuša was once a big settlement, being home to more than a thousand people and even more sheep, cows, horses, and chickens. Originally, all houses were made from wood, stones, and clay earth, with heavy stone slabs as roofing material. But as times changed, more and more repairs or additions are made using new materials, techniques and styles. The best example

for this is the disappearance of stone-shingle roofs: the slabs, made from a local stone, are so heavy that they can only be supported by thick oak beams. But as the landscape around Gostuša has been declared a Nature Park, it is not legal to fell oak trees anymore. The price of oak wood at a store, however, is significantly higher than of other types of wood – thus, the stone-covered roofs are consecutively disappearing. I was told that only one man, who was already over 80 years old, knew how to cover a roof in the traditional style anymore. Through this impressive example, I learned which challenges heritage conservation faces within a world, where not only human lifestyles and technologies are constantly evolving, but also the natural environment is changing rapidly.

The last stop on that summer's journey was the city of Rijeka in Croatia. The project there was not handicraft-oriented, but a creative and interactive planning project. In preparation of Rijeka being European Capital of Culture in 2020, we were exploring new ways of interpreting the industrial heritage of the city. My favourite part was the urban exploring to get a feeling of a city's habits and inhabitants, the rhythms, smells and sounds of urban life. We got guided tours around heritage sites that are currently being restored, drank coffee in different bars every day and asked people in the streets what they thought about industrial heritage. Although I

learned a lot from the planning sessions as well, I soon realised that planning or consulting would not be a job for me since I preferred talking to carpenters and builders over politicians and academics. Maybe this was one of the most important things I took home with me – that I did not want a career in academia or urban planning, to which some of my study colleagues were aspiring.

After the experience of 2018, I knew that I wanted to return to work with European Heritage Volunteers the next summer.

I applied as group coordinator for three projects – in Finland, Albania and the Ore Mountains in Germany. Before the first project started, all future group coordinators gathered for one week in a manor near Berlin to get to know each other, the rules and principles of the organisation, and the details of the projects they would partake in. The seminar also enabled me to exchange with experienced group coordinators, who were willing to answer even the most absurd questions. Knowing that I had a whole network of fellow coordinators with similar concerns helped me to overcome the nervousness at the beginning of each project.

My first trip took me to Laitila in the south-west of Finland. I had no idea what to expect – all I believed to know about Finland was that very few people lived there and they didn't talk much,

but I was excited to learn more. The project was dealing with traditional wooden construction techniques in an open-air farm museum. The work instructors were two carpenters specialised in traditional wooden architecture who did not talk a lot in the beginning, but after a few days of common work and shared meals, they really opened up. They even took us to a sauna, a once-in-a-lifetime experience. We made the traditional bundles of birch branches that are used to stimulate blood circulation and went swimming in a lake between sauna sessions. The smell of wet birch leaves is something I will always connect with Finland now.

From one of the northernmost countries of Europe, I travelled far south, to Albania. As I mentioned, I have been fascinated by the Balkan Peninsula for some time. With their particularly multicultural past and often under-represented current developments, the cities and landscapes of south-eastern Europe were again and again questioning my understanding of Europe. One of the countries I had been planning to visit for years was Albania, which is why I was pleased to become group coordinator for a European Heritage Volunteers Project there. The project was an ambitious attempt to rescue and preserve tombs of the vast necropolis belonging to the ancient city of Amantia. It took place in August, and the experiences from last year's Albania project showed that the biggest challenge at

this time of the year would be the heat, especially because the site is completely exposed, with nothing more than a few shrubs to provide a little bit of shade. This meant, first of all, adapting the daily schedule to the climate. While the typical working day at European Heritage Volunteers Projects starts at 9 a.m. and ends at 4 p.m., we decided to work in the morning and the evening – between noon and 5 p.m. it was simply too hot to do any physical work. Thanks to the support of two experienced workers and the impressive endurance of the volunteers, we were able to complete all tasks. And although our small mountain village was quite isolated and there was not much to do in the evenings, everyone got along nicely. Many evenings were spent on the terrace exchanging stories with our hosts in a wild English-Italian-Albanian-Greek potpourri of languages.

The last project led me back to Germany, to Annaberg. I was particularly nervous about this one – an industrial heritage project in a former mine – although it soon became apparent that I had no reason to be. When thinking of miners, I did not expect them to be the most open-minded people. I do apologise for these crude prejudices, because from day one, everyone welcomed us with such warmth and gratitude that I felt bad for having had such a bad image of the region. As newly listed World Heritage, the mining heritage of the Ore Mountains



was a truly unique world to look into. Though it was no surprise that some of the miner's traditions and phrases seemed strange to our Indian or Korean participants, I was astounded by how little even I knew about them, having grown up only about hundred kilometres away. While building a replica of a wooden hand-winch from the 16th century, we learned about the history of mining from a very practical perspective. We were working, among others, with a carpenter specialised in historical mining constructions and one of the last barrel-makers of Saxony, who was 84 years old. It was a pleasure to see the work evolving at the same pace as the relationships between volunteers and instructors. I witnessed the development of unlikely friendships: the barrel-maker became friends with a 21-year-old Portuguese carpenter, and a Russian volunteer had a great connection to one of the founders of the visitor's mine who spoke Russian very well. To me, this project was a major encouragement because I realised I did

not have to travel far away to find inspiring cultural landscapes. There are so many heritage sites just a stone's throw away from home that are waiting for our involvement.

Since September 2019, I have been working in historical-political education in Zittau, dealing mostly with Jewish regional history. My experiences with European Heritage Volunteers have already helped me a lot by giving me the confidence to approach local citizens about cultural heritage, knowing that it can bring people together and improve their relationship to their hometown. I have learned a great deal about communication and group dynamics through the volunteering projects, which certainly contributes to the productive atmosphere in my team. And, last but not least, I was able to experience Europe's cultural heritage as shared and interconnected, with common developments and exchange bridging the cultural gaps that might sometimes seem bigger than they actually are. With this in mind, I am attempting to counter the notion of periphery that often dominate regions close to state borders. Instead, I would like to emphasise the opportunities of cultural encounters. Living in a region where Poland, Czech Republic and Germany meet, right in the heart of Europe, seems to be the best place to start from.

■ *Anne Kleinbauer*

INTERDISCIPLINARY EXCHANGE

What I learned in Germany and Armenia about heritage and beyond

Considering my professional interests as an architect, volunteering projects were a perfect opportunity to visit unique heritage sites not only as a tourist. My take-away after participating in four different projects was that heritage professionals must be open to collaborating with and acquiring knowledge from other disciplines in order to deal with its complexity.

One of my first projects was in Weimar, a cultural centre of 18th and 19th century Europe. The hands-on work took place at Belvedere Castle complex, a part of the World Heritage site “Classical Weimar”. Under the supervision of the head gardener, we uncovered parts of historic paths according to the original plans. Before this experience, I didn’t know much about parks and gardens, or how they were planned and managed. Due to my educational background in architecture, the focus of my interest and knowledge was more on the style of buildings and their construction system. However, after two weeks on site, with guided tours through different parts of the park and daily exchange with professionals in charge of conservation and maintenance of the complex, I learned so much beyond my field of knowledge – how the planners in the past shaped natural elements following the philosophy of the period, as well as what can be done today to preserve these values.

And it was not only about learning from the gardeners. The group of volunteers was quite diverse. We had interesting discussions inspired by our tasks and the picturesque places where we were visiting. I loved the explanation made by a student of botany about the characteristics and uses of plants we could see in the park, while a historian shared some anecdotes related to the history of the place. Indeed, working on a heritage site was a perfect frame for interdisciplinary exchange and tackling different topics.

My desire for new exchanges led me to cemeteries, where the task was documentation – a Jewish one in Germany, and a Christian one in Armenia. As an architect, I was experienced in mapping the area and positioning elements in space, so that’s how I could contribute, while for the descriptive and interpretative parts of the work, the knowledge of anthropologists and historians was crucial. Every skill was valuable, so finally these interdisciplinary collaborations resulted in mapping two different cemeteries and documenting and describing more than 300 gravestones.

During the documentation of the Jewish cemetery, there was even an additional collaboration. Experts from a university came to test scanning technology on the surface of the stone in order to enable better reading of damaged parts

and collect more information. It is amazing how digital technologies can help save the inscriptions of centuries-old gravestones and give us new material to study. I imagined all the secrets that could be discovered!

In the end, every time I stood in front of the finished project, I was amazed by the results – how we have achieved them combining our knowledge and new lessons learned. Volunteering projects have really shown how working for heritage requires collaboration and how interesting it is to learn from each other. Ultimately it is what heritage is about – exchange and bringing people together.

■ *Sanja Platiša*



Learning by unconscious immersion

European Heritage Volunteers Projects are an excellent opportunity for an interdisciplinary exchange. For the short period of two weeks, volunteers from different professional backgrounds are invited to become carpenters, miners, Stone Age enthusiasts, ceramic conservators, dry-stone masons, or someone else, with a rare – even exotic – vocation.



They need to pick up new skills, adopt new routines, and in general learn to do something unusual. There is a master, the technical instructor, who guides them at every step, and provides them with a wealth of practical know-how.

I have been a group coordinator for seven projects. At the beginning, I thought that this interdisciplinary exchange was about an opportunity to step into another field of expertise, adopt new skills, and gain confidence in manual work. But over time, I began to notice that there is another aspect of it, less practical and more emotional – very subtle, but rewarding. It is the degree of engagement of the master.

The tasks that the participants usually do are quite straightforward: split this tree trunk, arrange the beams in equal distance, apply two centimetres of mortar, sort the stones in this pile by size, carefully remove the old tiles from each side of the roof and many other such tasks. Of course, the participants who come from non-heritage backgrounds are completely out of their comfort zone. But even for the participants who do come from heritage backgrounds, such as architecture, archaeology, art history and others, find the same tasks equally challenging.

The projects begin with excitement and focus on the dos and don'ts of the

particular handicraft. But gradually, especially after the free Sunday, the participants might begin to lose steam and to lack enthusiasm. At this stage, critical for the mood of the group is the ability of the masters to interact with them and to express their passion for the work.

One participant coined the term “story time” for the regular moments in the afternoon when the technical instructor shared memories of his life. But even if a master does not speak a word of English – as it often happens – it is still possible to have an authentic human interaction. Perhaps it could be learning the names of the tools in the local language. Or even simply staying together in one place with the masters, watching how they hammer a nail, search for the perfect stone, or drink a cup of coffee can be as valuable for the participants as following their directions.

The interdisciplinary exchange does not end with an instructive demonstration or verbal recording of facts about an archaic craft. It also contains something far stranger. I would describe this as an “unconscious immersion” into the pleasant time when the participants work shoulder-by-shoulder with the craftsmen and learn what is like to be one of them.

■ *Petar Petrov*

A restorer's perspective

The field of conservation-restoration holds interdisciplinarity as one of its foundational ethical principles; nonetheless, the profession seems to be shrouded, even among cultural heritage professionals, by an aura of secrecy and mystery, which often leads to a skewed representation of the conservator's-restorer's role in the preservation of cultural heritage. The idealised vision of the conservator-restorer magically saving even the most damaged artwork with monk-like patience, is as misleading as the image of the restorer as a simple artisan, a factotum that can fix anything from one's broken kitchen chair to a priceless Da Vinci. This misunderstanding, in my opinion, is caused primarily by a fundamental ignorance about what our profession entails, not only in theory, but in practice as well.

In light of the ever-increasing necessity for interdisciplinarity in heritage conservation, this inefficiency in establishing a connection between fields is becoming, in my eyes, a big flaw in my profession. We need to rethink the way conservation-restoration is being presented, particularly to those who are responsible for the future of heritage.

This is where I think the European Heritage Volunteers Projects offer an excellent example as to how this can be done in an ethical, safe and innovative way: they redefine interdisciplinarity

because unlike traditional projects which bring together experts from different fields to contribute with inputs from their own specialty, they take people from disparate areas of study and work and allow them to come in contact with the work of the conservator-restorer firsthand.

I participated on three such projects at different heritage sites and I cannot understate how refreshing and enriching my experience was. The first benefit, direct exchange of knowledge and skills, is almost self-explanatory; these projects allow people from more theoretical fields to gain practical experience on artworks, which will doubtlessly enrich their understanding of the objects they are helping to preserve. On the other hand, more practically oriented professionals can come in contact with a less single-minded, material-oriented understanding of artwork, and reframe their perception of what heritage is and how to preserve it.

However, there are other more subtle and complex links that are established during these shared experiences which I consider just as important. Through the way these projects are structured, the learning experience is always entangled with the bonding experience within the volunteer group; thus it stops being just a form of academic pursuit – as it would be if it was just



part of a university curriculum – and becomes part of something more personal, more intimate and engaging.

This is, in my opinion, the true key to these projects' success: They allow a form of interdisciplinarity that is natural, spontaneous, human. The friendships I forged during these experiences have lasted the test of time and have helped me to develop myself both as a professional and as a person. European Heritage Volunteers Projects create bonds not just between disciplines, but between people. Which is, perhaps, what we most need – and what in our narrow-mindedness, we most often forget.

■ *Erica Sartori*

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Volunteering and the academic life

Volunteering can be a really good tool for developing skills much needed in the professional world. It is clear how it is a great tool to help a community, raise awareness, transmit knowledge, empower the locals... – the list goes on and on. But its professional side can be easily overlooked and taken for granted, and one of its benefits is how it helps to create new skills and strengthen others.

I have always been a library rat and I always knew I wanted to pursue an academic life, so you might wonder how volunteering in topics focused on hands-on and physical work can help to achieve that. Personally, I started volunteering years ago; it was not in something related to heritage, but with kids. However, it was not until two years ago when I volunteered for the first time with European Heritage Volunteers that I became aware of how it could help my professional and personal development. After years of being at university doing research project after research project, internship after internship, presentation after presentation, I was really tired of academia. Sometimes it felt like a really closed world where you are not able to develop certain skills or have certain experiences.

And then, European Heritage Volunteers came into my life. Apart from the incredible experience of being surrounded by professional partners,

work instructors and volunteers from all over the world, and learning many different handcrafts and techniques, it helped me to know me better: what I was interested in, my own limits, my own strengths and weaknesses, my objectives in life, and many, many more things. I mean, now after two years of learning to build a dry stone wall, to plaster a wall, to restore wooden windows or helping in the reconstruction of a roof, I might be even able to make my own house. But jokes aside, it is also really motivating to be surrounded with people who are so invested and passionate about their work, and so willing to teach you about it. And also volunteers who are ready to learn about all of these handcrafts, of the place and of its history.

Two years ago, I was not sure if I had the necessary skills to be a group coordinator; I doubted if I would be able to work with such a big and multicultural group of people. But now and thanks to this experience, I have no doubts about my skills and I feel more confident than ever. I strengthened some skills I already had from my studies, like working with others, working in a big interdisciplinary and multicultural team, critical and practical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills. But I also learnt about group dynamics and facilitation skills that I didn't have before. At the same time, I was aware of some skills

I had beforehand, but I had completely overlooked within myself, like cultural awareness, openness, flexibility, and a lot of organisational skills such as time management, multi-tasking, and prioritising. Personally, volunteering gave me soft skills and tools that I consider essential to success on my PhD.

■ *Paula O'Donohoe Villota*



Earth, the timeless sculptor of memory

As an architect, a significant part of my work is to ask questions. I frequently find myself wondering about matters of space, place, time, tradition, heritage and materiality: how can they continuously connect, consciously interact and be fully experienced in a sensitive way.

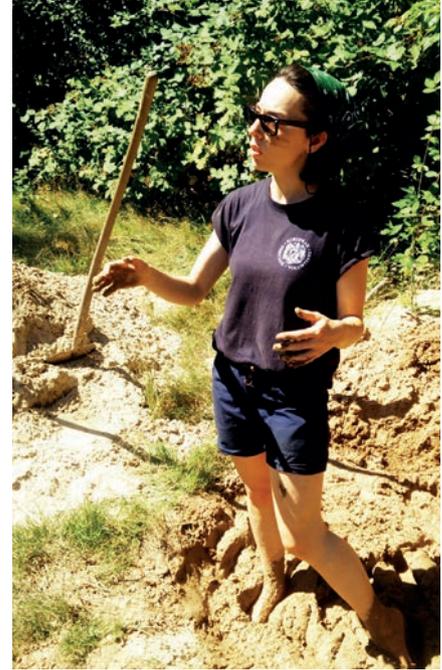
The question as to what comprises material is started to develop in my mind during the European Heritage Training Course “Traditional hand-craft techniques” in Quedlinburg and Halberstadt, Germany. There, working alongside master Oliver Raupach, plastering the historical walls of a timber frame house with clay, my perception of earth as a building material awakened. Unlike the lifeless methods modernity makes use of – and contemporaneity insists on using – earth prevails as a living system, where variances in temperature, breathability, and comfort are intensely perceived through our sensibility. The consciousness of the pulsing livability of earth is what, ultimately, creates a responsive understanding of it – a flux of sensations connecting to the human experience of senses. Through the empathic relation of space and materials, not only does our perception surrounding reality increase, but also our sense of interiority, reaffirming the most primitive and fundamental sphere of existence: awareness. Amongst the commotion of the house in Halberstadt,

with my hands still wet from the clay, my acute perception of that very moment suddenly took me to a childhood image of myself seated in the garden, blissfully playing, with warm soil slowly sliding through my fingers.

Inspired by Oliver’s professional and personal path, as well as the memory of my delighted five-year-old self, a journey into the origins of earth as a material began. Within the coils of time, I went back more than 3,000 years into the distant lands of World Heritage cities of Iran. Plunging into a narrative of ancestral wisdom, from that magnificent country I brought yet another question: how can our ancestry be consciously assimilated in the spectrum of our present and future experiences?

I encountered potential response while collaborating once more with the European Heritage Volunteers, in the conservation project at the Museum Village of Düppel. Rebuilding time through the permanent and unsettling exercise of interrogation and investigation is a constant at this open-air museum, making it a testing ground where renewed interpretations are sustained by medieval building techniques.

While working with master Roger Kramer on the conservation of one of the houses in need of a rammed earth floor and cob walls, I was able to observe



what might be the ultimate perpetuated wisdom of our ancestors: craftsmanship, the recognition that the intuitive and adaptive human hand is, in reality, the primordial of all existing tools.

Since the most valuable lessons are the ones coming from a place of humility and heart-felt dedication, it was through my experiences with Oliver and Roger that I established the fundamentals of my practice as an architect: the acknowledgement of handmade forms of construction as a testimony to time and collective memory – a profoundly poetic way of transmuting the inherited rituals of our ancestors into tangible heritage and consequently reconnecting with the primitive meaning of dwelling.

■ *Marlene Jabouille*

Beyond the books and university halls: experiencing European heritage

To me, European Heritage Volunteers has become a path leading to unique and very unlikely experiences; especially for a young heritage practitioner coming from Honduras, which is a small, underdeveloped and usually unaccounted-for country. My town up in the mountains of Central America inhabits a world of its own, and usually people live their lives there without ever leaving the frame of surrounding peaks which they call home. Growing up devouring history books and dreaming of exploring lands with castles and ancient myths, I had a longing for adventure in faraway lands. This is why I crafted an escape plan.

My scheming eventually led me to Germany, where I became a World Heritage student. I discovered this amazing and novel line of studies that assembles different perspectives to build a solid background of theoretical knowledge needed to identify, protect, manage and present cultural and natural heritage. Taken from the official description, the programme incorporates various academic disciplines such as the humanities, architecture, conservation, ecology, management, tourism, and marketing. It thus emphasises the link between culture and nature, tangible and intangible heritage values, conservation and sustainable development. Students of World Heritage are encouraged to reflect upon how heritage is understood

and how it functions in societies all around the world. Nevertheless, although the programme allows for some practical activities, a student cannot really understand the meaning of heritage unless exposed to real, hands-on work in the field.

It would be through my momentous encounter with European Heritage Volunteers however, that I acquired a taste of what it really meant to be a student of heritage. Real understanding of the theoretical knowledge I had studied came as a slow realisation to me as the summer progressed and I joined each different project.

In our World Heritage courses, one of my favourite lectures was about cultural landscapes. In this course, we learned the concept from the perspective of UNESCO as it being a composite landscape, which integrates the works of men to its surrounding nature in an interconnected bond creating a new natural development. We also studied the various types of historical gardens and how these conceptions were developed, interpreted and appreciated by different cultures.

This is why I chose to join the project “Restoration and maintenance of historic parks and gardens” in Weimar’s World Heritage site as my first project with European Heritage Volunteers.

I was delighted to meet the people in charge of the foundation who actually managed these gardens and landscapes with the dedication and knowledge I would have expected from professionals who understood the importance of these sites as well as I. The concepts I had learned in class now had a visual image and an explanation of practical relevance provided by the caretakers of these places. One example was an explanation the gardener provided about how they’re dealing with the death of an old tree which belongs to the controlled scenery of an English garden. He showed us a drawing from the late 18th century which clearly showed this specific tree standing on the spot where the carcass of an old tree now stood, surrounded by several younger trees. He told us that the tree had the important function of creating a natural frame for the view of the small castle in the distance, as seen from the viewpoint we were standing on. Since the position of the tree can’t be changed, the gardeners must take no chances in replacing a dying tree. For this reason, several smaller trees are planted around, one of which will be chosen to remain and replace the deceased tree. This kind of methodic planning and knowledgeable respect for the authenticity and integrity of the site impressed me.

The experience in Weimar allowed me to appreciate the work, complexity

and dedication of the management of heritage sites such as this one, which an uninformed visitor would probably dismiss as simple gardening. It also granted me a more grounded perspective of my field of studies, while igniting in me a curiosity for learning more.

That summer, I also found myself transported to the medieval heart of a stunning cultural landscape in the Middle Rhine Valley. This place is the material for the legends of dragons, mischievous dwarfs and knight heroes, which awoke the spark of excitement in my historian heart. We worked at the Marksburg Castle, which in itself looks like a fairytale location. The scenario of our work was unimaginably exciting for any Honduran, where we only read about castles in books, since our ancient buildings consist of Mayan pyramids and temples. While one week was dedicated to the reconstruction of an access staircase to the castle, the next week involved working with a local community organisation on the conservation of a historic dry stonewall of a traditional vineyard.

Our first task initially didn't seem to be connected to heritage conservation. It was a physical activity that caused the group of young heritage professionals to get tired and muddy. However, when combined with the actual interactions between the castle keeper and his men who worked there with us, we understood the need for this staircase. We

also learned from them the hard work involved in running a monument visited by hundreds of cruise-liner tourists every day. Most of them, who we called "the pirates" due to their ragged looks, had been working at the site for over twenty years and had developed a special bond to their castle. It was a very enriching experience for me to understand a monument from the perspective of those who worked on its upkeep, while also dealing directly with the impacts of – as well as the solutions to – mass tourism. This was all directly from the words of my textbooks, and now I had a chance to actually live it!

Then we joined the work of a group of very nice heritage enthusiasts from the small village of Spay along the Rhine. These people had committed themselves to the conservation of their village's cultural identity within a World Heritage landscape. From them, we learned how to restore dry stone walls. The project also provided interesting insight to a community involved in heritage conservation within a place where a living culture was still cherished and celebrated. We were guests at the village's celebrations, joining the band playing traditional German folk music and trying the local food, as well as learning about its history as a place surrounded by tourist destinations without ever becoming one. As a World Heritage student, I found this a fascinating example of authenticity surviving the onslaught of mass tourism.

These experiences in the Middle Rhine Valley illustrated the kind of educational voyages that European Heritage Volunteers Projects provide. In a way, the projects transform lecture halls of the university into villages like Spay where the heritage students can understand the theoretical concepts of heritage and culture while actually living them and participating in the action.

This excited curiosity took me later to Albania, an exotic location I'd never imagined visiting. We worked on the restoration of the roof of an 11th century church atop a hill in the middle of a mostly abandoned mountain village. This trip was one of the most magical experiences of my life, and without a doubt has changed my own interpretation of the meaning of my professional path. It was an experience of joy to stand at the top of that hill with the Ionian Sea below and contemplate how far I had come: from my days as a law student in Central America to helping restore this ancient building in a faraway land. In this moment, I had an epiphany that I was now really a heritage professional.

The work in Albania was, as in the previous projects, an occasion for networking amongst the participants with different heritage-related backgrounds. Throughout the project, we had during the hard labor great bonding moments. It was an enriching experience to learn from my peers about so many topics



related to my professional interests and discuss them in a context outside of the university halls.

I think this aspect of the European Heritage Volunteers Programme is one of the most important elements, which is faultlessly considered on each project. I found a well-balanced group of diverse young professionals on each project, creating the perfect environment for cultivating interesting interactions and conversations.

However, to me personally, the most important takeaway from my involvement in these projects as a professional has been the opportunity to understand the meaning of my work and its possible effects on the people who live and interact with their own heritage. The community-oriented projects of European Heritage Volunteers allowed me to see how my work can have a real impact in communities. It also granted me the privileged chance to actively use and share my knowledge, ascertaining

that my World Heritage studies don't have to be all about the theoretical notions I learned in the hopes of securing an office job at UNESCO.

The best example for this was at the end of our work in Albania. Before we began the reconstruction of the roof in the old church, amongst the dirty interior of the ruined structure, we found several traditional Christian-Orthodox icons of saints hanging from the iconostasis. Behind the images, we discovered written messages, which we later learned were prayers by devotees asking for special favors or protection dating back decades. One of the participants made it her own personal task to clean each icon and hang it back on the wall or place them in the niches behind the altar where we had found them once we finished working. As we were sweeping the floor and getting the place ready for the re-inauguration, we helped her to carefully place the clean icons back in their places. As we did, a small old lady came in and kissed some of the icons and lit a candle by the iconostasis. Then she turned to us and said a prayer in her language with a glow of happiness in her small wrinkly face, her eyes full of gratitude. She then left and we sat down in silence, staring at the faint light of the candle. We all had tears in our eyes; we were exhausted but satisfied. It was there and then that I understood I'd made the right choice when I left home to study World Heritage in Germany.

It was also during the project in Albania that I found myself to be part of a heritage community that transcends borders and that speaks the same language, regardless of cultural or national backgrounds. I also felt at ease to continue working to preserve European heritage while being a non-European. Through these projects and being welcomed as a Latin American, I truly learned that heritage is simply human and that we are all sharing this wonderful experience of being humans together in colourful diversity.

After this, I decided to join more European Heritage Volunteers and became an active endorser of the programme amongst my colleagues at the World Heritage studies programme. I believe this to be the best opportunity for students to grasp hands-on activities, and it is also an inspirational experience to motivate us in this challenging area of study. The UNESCO World Heritage Committee is a highly politicised entity. This international organisation needs to be more grounded in the realities of the communities that live and experience heritage in order to remember the purpose of heritage conservation. It is through the hard work of wonderful people like the team at European Heritage Volunteers that this idealistic approach is kept alive, staying true to the purpose of those who inspired and crafted the World Heritage Convention.

■ *Juan Carlos Barrientos*

INITIATION OF OWN INITIATIVE

Dreams of heritage turning real

Having a great appreciation of heritage and its beneficial influence on our daily life, I have always been looking for ways to promote it and raise awareness about it. During the past summer, I was happy to find out that volunteering for heritage is one of the best ways to stay in touch with heritage, help to conserve it, and at the same time, promote it.

I enjoy the effects of volunteering work. I particularly like to see the immediate results of manual labor in the preservation and safeguard of our common heritage, the sense of community and the newly formed friendships. As an art historian and cultural manager, a relationship with heritage subjects has always been of utmost importance.

My history with European Heritage Volunteers began in 2017, when I applied and joined the European Heritage Times digital newspaper. Since then, this has provided the opportunity to write about and promote Romanian Heritage in a personal way, based on my experience and background.

Then, in the summer of 2019, I applied for two summer projects. I first went to Finland, where I had the opportunity to restore a wooden shingle roof at Kauppila open-air farm museum, in the region of Laitila Municipality. The roof reconstruction involved the removal of old shingles and the addition of new fir

shingles in an overlapping fashion that allows for effective water circulation. In a team of twelve volunteers, we also got to repair sectors of spruce fencing, following the traditions and ways of Vikings. These fences were built entirely with wood gathered in the nearby forest. Their role was not necessarily to offer protection inside the property, but mostly to keep sheep and other animals away from predators. During the last two days of the project, we teamed up to learn how to cook natural iron-oxide based paint, with oil and rye flour. This paint takes a few hours to cook and requires constant stirring. With the quantity prepared, we were almost able to finish painting the two façades of the main structure at Kauppila farm museum.

In Finland, we experienced first-hand the hosts' love for heritage education and preservation. On the bright side, the local community will continue the maintenance work on site, applying the Finnish principle of *talkoo*, voluntary communal work in Finland, which we already appropriated and enjoyed.

The next project took place in a huge Renaissance castle in Saxony-Anhalt, Germany. I coordinated the participants of the Training Course in traditional wooden techniques. We got to take care of 300-year-old pine windows from the Baroque era. Some of the windows had metal bindings decorated with wheat shapes, an evocation of Baroque style in this area. Meticulous work was necessary to restore the windows:



removal of glass panes by cracking the hardened putty and copper nails. Then, using a heat source and a narrow chisel, we had to remove all layers of old paint. The surface needed smoothing and corrections where the wood was completely rotten. After completing these steps, new putty was prepared, and the same glass panes were put in place using the newly prepared putty and new copper nails. Due to its high concentration of oil, the new putty takes two years before completely drying. In the end, we added two layers of white paint on the windows. During just ten working days, the seven-member team managed to complete the restoration of twenty-two windows.

Following these two enriching experiences, I began dreaming of creating a similar project in Romania. My motivation stemmed from wanting to give back to the community and promote the rich heritage my home country has to offer. In early autumn, I relied on the framework of the non-governmental organisation I work with – the “Heritage for the Future” Cultural Association – to find a Romanian partner and start building a project in Romania. Having in mind the wide-ranging heritage classification, the “Heritage for the Future” Cultural Association and Bistrița Năsăud Museum Complex agreed to direct their focus on clothing, specifically sheepskin coats and vests in the Museum’s collection, some of them dating back to the 1890s.

Clothing constantly builds a bridge between tangible and intangible heritage, as well as between past times and present times, since old fashion constitutes contemporary inspiration.

In order to promote the Romanian folk traditions and the national costume, the two partners designed a project with both working and educational activities. The working activities range from cleaning procedures to silk embroidery stitching. The educational part considers the history and uses of the Romanian folk costume, as well as folk dances and practical pottery lessons.

Working and educational activities are set in a quiet town with Saxon history in the northern area of Romania, bordered by forests and breathtaking views.

I am glad that I have the opportunity to pass the European Heritage Volunteers Programme on, and I am sure that other former participants will do so in their home countries, too. I am convinced that the combination of all these small initiatives is building a better future for our shared cultural heritage.

■ *Sorina Neacsu*

What about organising a volunteering project in Portugal? Sure, let’s do it!

I had a great time as a volunteer in Germany! We learned a traditional technique for the conservation of dry stone walls in the Middle Rhine Valley. This hands-on experience with an international group was so fantastic that I wanted to repeat it. So, I returned in the following summer to be a group coordinator, where I gained experience with the backstage logistics of a project. Now I was ready to host a project about heritage conservation in my home country, Portugal!

The decision was made, and the enthusiasm was enormous, but the number of questions that suddenly appeared

was even bigger: Where? Which type of heritage and which perspective? Who can be the partner? What would be interesting for the participants and at the same time possible for them to work with? What is the priority? Who would teach them? There are so many options!

After some research and some long deep breaths, the topic was chosen: conservation of *azulejos*, traditional Portuguese tiles. These beautiful ceramic tiles decorate the façades of several buildings with colourful patterns, giving a unique light to the streets of Lisbon, as well as in other cities. They are endangered due to several reasons

and having some help to restore them would be very useful.

Now, the search for the best partner would begin. But then I encountered a different question: How would I present myself? As a graduate student in the heritage field? As a former participant of a heritage volunteering project? As an enthusiast? Well, a mixture of all helped, and then I was inside the network of partners. And, if being an initiator is a rewarding feeling, it is remarkable to be an enthusiastic receptor of a fresh idea from the outside. In this way, I would like to thank all the people and institutions that were motivated to help and that guided me to find the final partner. It's also important to have in mind that a site with a manageable distance is essential to organise the preparation and consequently make the project possible. And even though it sounds



alike a cliché, emotional support from friends and family is also quite essential when you are starting a project of your own, which requires so much time and energy.

Especially when the bureaucratic world invades, and everything gets more complicated. The permissions, legal notices, the institutional hierarchy were shadowing the realisation of the project. It felt like a battle between an idea and the administrative institutions, which instead of being enemies, should be really good friends and build wonderful things together. Well, my strong belief in the project gave me a morale boost to not give up!

Several meetings later, the project was set. Especially helpful was the Project Partners Meeting organised by European Heritage Volunteers, where it was possible to meet people and institutions from different countries who had similar questions. I would also like to say a word of appreciation for European Heritage Volunteers for having received my proposal and by allowing me to realise this project.

Meanwhile, the second round of challenges starts: accommodation details, gender balance, food issues, work insurance, choice of educational activities, language, materials, costs of transportation between home and work... Using a checklist is a great tip! Eventually, things start to be in harmony with each other.

So, the work can be done, it's safe, it's of great importance and the technical instructors are ready to give all the training and support. What can neither be seen nor done during work time, or that must be explained with a different perspective, belongs to the educational programme that complements the working part. The paperwork is sorted, and the accommodation booked. The food is divided into national meals prepared by the project partner and international dishes prepared by the volunteers. Even the gift bag has been properly chosen and ready. The countdown starts.

Suddenly, it is the arrival day and the participants appear full of energy. And before you know it, two amazing weeks vanish: the work is finished, the activities for raising awareness have been fulfilled, the project partner and the technical instructors are happy with the results and the participants are smiling! Honestly, seeing the participants made me think of the time I was myself a participant, but it was even more fulfilling, as they were now at my home. A very warm thank you to them!

Did it happen? Yes! Was it worth it to organise it? For sure, and thanks to a great project partner! Would I repeat it? I am already on the way to some meetings in different parts of the country to learn about other heritage topics.

■ *Mariana Martinho*



KALEIDOSCOPE OF HERITAGE VOLUNTEERS PROJECTS



ARCHAEOLOGICAL SITES

In the field of archaeology, the engagement of volunteers has a long tradition. For a long time, archaeology and its related disciplines were the fields of cultural heritage where the highest number of volunteers were involved, and in some European countries this is still the case today.

The varying intensity of voluntary engagement for archaeological heritage in different countries can be accounted for by the distinct role archaeology played in the history of each particular country, as well as the different levels of importance which certain eras – and their related archaeological sites – play in the country's current sense of national identity.

On one hand, voluntary engagement concerns the support of archaeological interventions and the handling of findings; most of the bigger archaeological excavations would not be possible without the support of volunteers. On the other hand, this concerns also systematic voluntary activities – such as the regular control of fields after ploughing in order to detect pieces of ceramics and other findings – which contribute to detailed knowledge about the history of a particular region, and even lead to the discovery of important archaeological sites in some cases. In several countries, associations of local volunteers which undertake such checks are a relevant component of the archaeological and heritage monitoring system.

Though the primary motivation to voluntarily engage in the field of archaeology might be caused by the fascination of touching remains from distant times and by an unspecified hope to discover, the comparably high grade of voluntary engagement in the field of archaeology is caused first and foremost by the specifics of archaeological interventions:

Excavations need a big amount of supporting work – cutting away turf and the upper layers of soil, transporting the soil by wheelbarrows a certain distance away in order not to interfere with the excavations, and later transporting the soil back and closing the site – which provides an optimal field for voluntary engagement. At the same time, the works do not demand special security regulations, since the risk of accidents and injuries is, compared with other fields of heritage interventions, quite low.

But also, the next step – excavating, cleaning the layers and documenting them – is often carried out or at least supported by volunteers under the supervision of professional archaeologists.

Finally, the handling of the findings is often supported by volunteers, too, since cleaning, sorting and cataloguing of findings are personnel-intensive activities, which can be carried out by volunteers in many cases, after an appropriate introduction.



But the field of voluntary engagement is much wider when adjacent topics such as awareness raising for archaeological heritage, engagement at archaeological museums and experimental archaeology are considered.

Nevertheless, the “cosmos” of volunteers engaged for archaeological heritage is quite closed, and archaeology is often not the first field which comes to the mind of a young professional from another heritage-linked background – architecture, history of arts, restoration and others – when reflecting about cultural heritage. While composing the groups of project participants to be as diverse as possible, European Heritage Volunteers aims to make this invisible border more permeable and to awake interest in and even passion for archaeological heritage among heritage professionals with other specialisations, thus strengthening interdisciplinary exchange.



EXCAVATION AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL COLLECTIONS MANAGEMENT

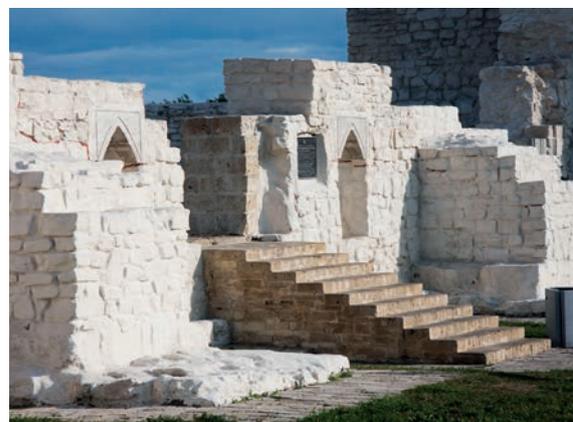
Bolgar Historical and Archaeological Complex · Russia

How to involve the volunteers into archaeology: the experience of Bolgar and the European Heritage Volunteers



possibilities for future research at the site are manifold. Only five percent of its total area of 424 hectares has been excavated, whereas ninety five percent remains unexplored.

Bolgar Historical and Archaeological Complex was inscribed to the World Heritage List in 2014.



Bolgar Historical and Archaeological Complex lies on the shores of the Volga River in the Republic of Tatarstan, Russia. It contains the remains of the medieval city of Bolgar that existed from the 7th to the 15th centuries.

Bolgar was founded by the Volga Bulgarians and later it became the first capital of the Golden Horde and one of the major trading and cultural hubs of the Kazan Khanate. The city was located at the crossroads of northern Silk Roads and served as an interaction point for urban and nomadic cultures.

Bolgar is also an important place for Muslim pilgrims as the symbolic place of the acceptance of Islam in 922 by the Volga Bulgarians.

The site preserves its spatial context with its historical moat and wall, religious and civil structures, including a former mosque, a minaret and several mausoleums, bath houses, and the remains of a Khan's palace and shrine.

Although many historical facts are known about Bolgar and are proven by various archaeological findings, the

The annual European Heritage Volunteers Project was launched at the site in 2017 and was the first volunteering project in Bolgar. The project is run by Bolgar State Museum–Reserve, the site management of the World Heritage site, and is funded by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Tatarstan. Excavation and archaeological collections management were selected as the key areas for the involvement of volunteers.

From 2017 to 2019 over sixty international and national volunteers contributed to the conservation, research and documentation of the archaeological heritage of Bolgar. They have found, cleaned, measured and documented over 10,000 archaeological findings, making them accessible for researchers via electronic database and for the youth via social media.

As a project coordinator, I am trying to explore what is hidden below the quantitative results of the work of the European Heritage Volunteers in Bolgar. This time I decided to ask our technical instructors about this question.

Denis Badeev is a research associate for the Institute of Archaeology of the Russian Academy of Sciences who has been leading archaeological excavations in Bolgar since 2011. He started to work with the volunteers in 2017:

“Probably the most important objective was to integrate the volunteers to the excavation team. I was afraid that new people might disrupt the organisation of the field work. However, with the involvement of the volunteers, we could continue practicing soil sifting; it is an important operation to find small, but

valuable artefacts. We could also process ceramic finds in time, so I decided to take this chance. I have realised that a volunteer is, above all, a person interested in archaeological excavations: if I share my knowledge and skills in archaeology with the volunteers, they respond with conscientious work. Moreover, the project helps to build the capacities of the excavation team, as it brings international volunteers to Bolgar. Working together, we improve our English language and international communications skills.”

Evgeniya Fedorova, the chief custodian of the Bolgar State Museum-Reserve, is in charge of its large collection, including over 120,000 archaeological items. She started to involve the volunteers in archaeological collections management in 2018:





“On behalf of the Collection’s Management Department, I can say that after working with the volunteers for two years, we have very positive impressions. The volunteers’ contributions are enormous: transfer of artefacts from different storages, photo documentation, and inventory reconciliation. We accomplish a huge scope of work with the volunteers in only ten working days. This helps to digitise the archaeological heritage of Bolgar, as well as to introduce new methods to collections management practices. However, we still have certain issues with the Russian-English language barrier, but we are working on it and ready to share with new volunteers the secrets of medieval Bolgar and its archaeological heritage”.

Both Denis and Evgeniya noticed that working with the volunteers takes certain time and efforts in motivating the participants. Often, the difficulties are related to the misrepresentation of archaeology from Indiana Jones movies: the expected adventures turn out to be hard and continuous work in field and storages. However, the supervisors agree that the individual work with the volunteers – tailoring tasks and detailed explanation of how certain activities contribute to heritage research and conservation – is the most effective way to overcome this situation.

It is possible to summarise, that from the view of the heritage professionals involved, the volunteers are bringing to Bolgar new capacity-building opportunities and assisting to implement additional heritage practices in the context of the annual European Heritage Volunteers Project.

However, there is no doubt that the larger contribution of volunteers lay in the new ideas, diverse visions and enthusiasm they brought to the staff working at the World Heritage site. Though this might be harder to define and measure, it is of equal importance, especially in archaeology.

■ *Nargiz Aituganova*
Research associate
Russian Scientific Research Institute
for Cultural and Natural Heritage





**EXCAVATION, ANASTYLOSIS
AND CONSERVATION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL FINDINGS**

Amantia Archaeological Park · Albania

Archaeological heritage: endangered by criminals, rescued by volunteers

Located in southern Albania, the Amantia Archaeological Park is not only one of the most important archaeological sites in the country, but it has the potential to serve as an engine of economic development for the entire region. Due to its historical, archaeological and architectural significance and environmental values, in 2005 it received the status of a “National Archaeological Park”. Though the protected area has a size of 300 hectares, the distribution of the architectural structures and archaeological findings extends to a much larger area.

In antiquity, Amantia was located geographically on the southernmost border of Southern Illyria. In the 4th century B.C., a fortified settlement was erected on a rocky hill with an elevation of 613 metres above sea level. The hill is an ideal point for the control of the Shushica and Vjosa river valleys, a strategic position for controlling the roads linking southern Illyria with Epirus. Amantia is not only the name of the ancient city, but also the name of the political territory. It was part of the state of Epirus, and around 230 B.C., it became independent and began to mint its own coins. The end of the 3rd century B.C. marks the heyday of this city, proved by its urban development and the construction of several public monuments. The terrain within the

fortified hill was insufficient, so important buildings and religious sites were built on the hillsides and the surrounding hills, such as the stadium and the Temple of Aphrodite.

Historic sources and archaeological evidence show that the ancient city endured for almost a millennium, from the classical period to late antiquity. Starting from the 19th century, foreign travellers and archaeologists started talking about Amantia again. Gaultier de Claubri, a member of the French School of Athens, was the first to visit and describe the ruins in 1858. He also managed to identify the ancient city of Amantia. After the Second World War, various Albanian archaeologists carried out excavations at the site. Excavations



uncovered the ancient stadium, the temple and the Paleo-Christian basilica and the ancient necropolis.





Amantia's necropolis extends over a large area to the hills, shores, and small terraces that lie below the city. Archaeological excavations have provided material from the 4th century B.C. The extended area and the large number of monumental tombs make Amantia one of the largest and most monumental necropolises of Albania. Surface surveys and archaeological excavations have documented forty monumental tombs. In Amantia there is the largest number of monumental tombs of the "Macedonian" type with a cylindrical arch cover, as well as "II-shaped" tombs and "built tumuli" tombs. The other tombs are of simple architecture, mostly cist-type tombs with stone slabs. The cemetery was used from the end of the classical period until the early Middle Ages.

Due to their monumental construction and rich inventory, the tombs have been objects of looting since antiquity, a phenomenon that continued till 2018 and is currently the most pressing issue at Amantia's necropolis. In addition, agricultural works and erosion have revealed cist tombs with stone slabs on the surface, which, as a result, have

also become the subjects of clandestine excavations. Over time, erosion has especially caused the opening and deformation of many cist tombs. Vegetation is another persistent problem, which in many cases has caused damage and deformation of monumental tombs' masonry. Finally, recent archaeological excavations have exposed monuments. Lack of conservative measures after excavations has led to the degradation of some of these structures. Exposure of the bricks to atmospheric influences caused their fragmentation and the risk of their complete demolition.



A European Heritage Volunteers Project was initiated to accomplish the necessary interventions to rescue and conserve these structures. The project focused on the most endangered parts which aimed to conserve and restore funerary structures as the first step in expanding the perspective to permanent intervention, maintenance, and the creation of conditions that will lead to a later musealisation of the site. The project was approved by the National Restoration Council and the National

Council of Archaeology and implemented by a group of specialists from the Regional Directorate of National Culture Vlora, which included archaeologists, architects and maintenance workers, a conservation specialist from Escola Superior de Conservación e Restauración de Bens Culturais de Galicia and fourteen young heritage professionals from the European Heritage Volunteers network.

The bricks of the monumental tomb 107 are quite fragile and contact with atmospheric influences had caused fragmentation and considerable damages, risking the complete demolition of some of the inner tomb chambers. To avoid further damages, first the brick structures inside and outside the tomb were cleared of soil and gravel. Afterwards, silicate injection was undertaken. To consolidate the broken bricks, brick powder from degraded bricks was injected. After the intervention had been completed, wooden supports were placed to hold the weight of the stone slabs' cover, which were in danger of collapsing, and finally the tomb was covered with geotextile, sand and clay.

During archaeological excavations in 2013, unidentified people damaged the façade of the "Jewish Tomb", opening and damaging a brick tomb inside the stone-block structure and leaving the monument destroyed, covered by soil and vegetation. First, the dense vegetation around the monument was

cleared and the accumulated soil on the quadratic structure of Hellenistic blocks cleaned. All the bricks that had been removed by grave robbers were collected and arranged near the tomb. The massive stones which had fallen from the façade were identified, raised up using a tripod and levers, and returned to their former position.

The tombs Nr. 1, 2, 4, 5 and 121 had been either violated by clandestine diggers or were in danger of damage or collapse. To avoid further damages the necessary interventions were undertaken – the tombs were excavated, incorporated in the overall plan, documented in detail, stabilised and covered by geotextile and soil.



To appreciate the results of the interventions and the respectable amount of the work done within the framework of the European Heritage Volunteers Project, the significant difficulties of the accomplished work have to be mentioned. Firstly, the time frame was very short for implementing such a large number of interventions. Secondly, high temperatures, difficult terrain and long distances from the base to the worksites – which caused up to two hours foot walk per day – were relevant challenges which influenced the project.

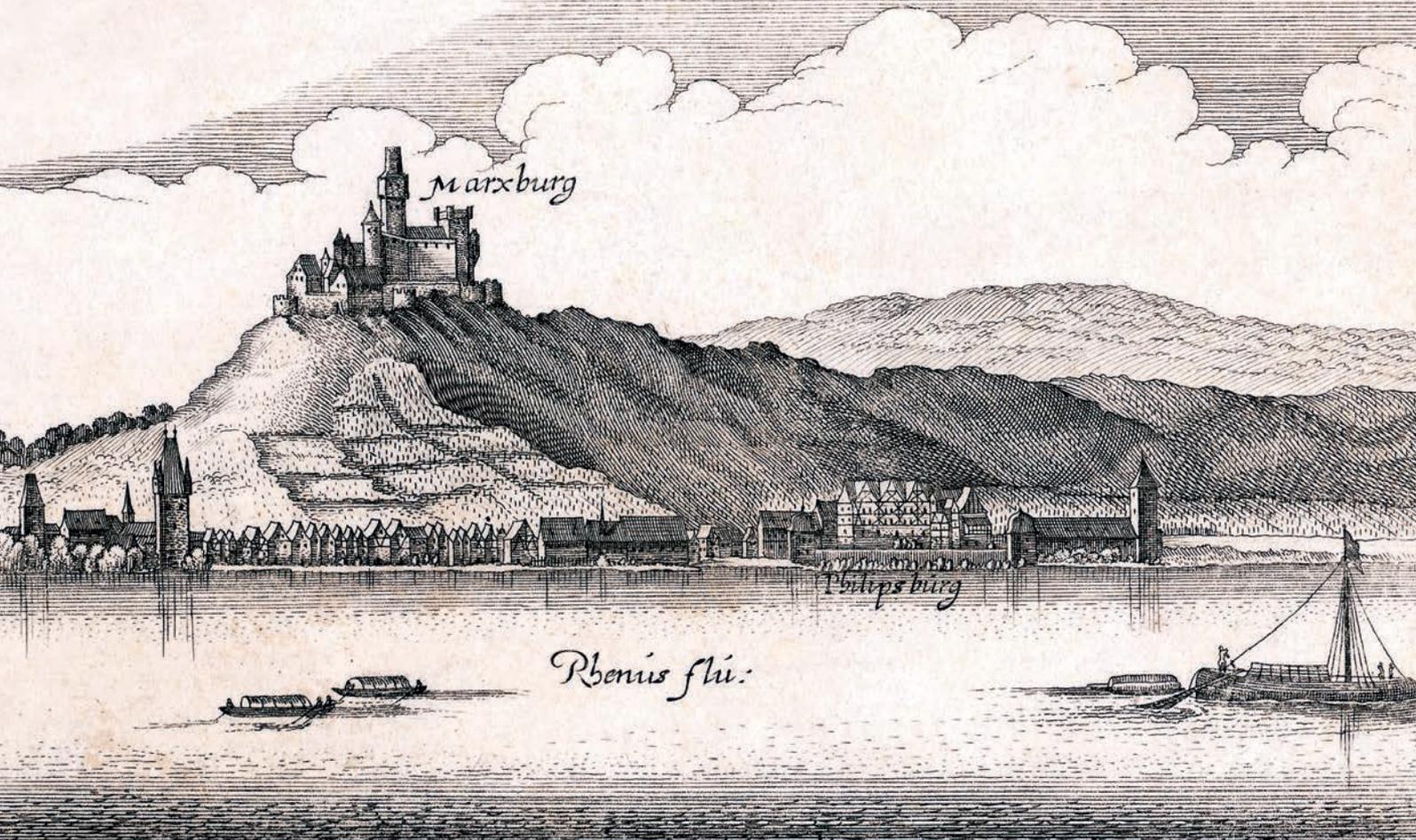
Despite the difficult conditions and limited time available, the main objectives of the project were successfully met. In the case of tomb 107, the intervention prevented further demolition of the brick structures by atmospheric influences. In the case of the “Jewish Tomb”, the south-east façade was restored and thus a very important funerary monument was rehabilitated. This intervention also helped to identify other parts of the structure of the tomb, so that also there anastylosis can be carried out in the future. The interventions at the cist tombs prevented their further damage. In addition to documenting them, it was very important to recover archaeological material – metallic objects, ancient coins, ceramic fragments, as well as partial and complete skeletal remains were found – and save valuable scientific information which was at risk of being lost.



In the short period of two weeks, a large amount of work was required – which in other conditions would have required at least a month – yet the results were excellent. The commitment of the participants from all around the world to the rehabilitation of the archaeological heritage of Amantia sent a very strong message towards the local community, who became aware of the importance of protecting the site. Presentations by Albanian specialists and the international participants sparked important discussions that helped to better understand the archaeological heritage of the participants’ countries and the dangers they face. The implementation of this first project, in partnership with the Regional Directorate of National Culture Vloa and European Heritage Volunteers, not only sets a good example for future practices for the rescue and the protection of the necropolis in Amantia, it also raises awareness among the local community about the need to protect their archaeological heritage.

■ *Kriledjan Çipa & Rineldi Xhelilaj*
Regional Directorate
of National Culture Vloa

BRAU BACH



**MARKING THE OUTLINE
OF A MIDDLE AGE CHAPEL**

Marksburg Castle · Germany

Marksburg Castle and its hidden chapel

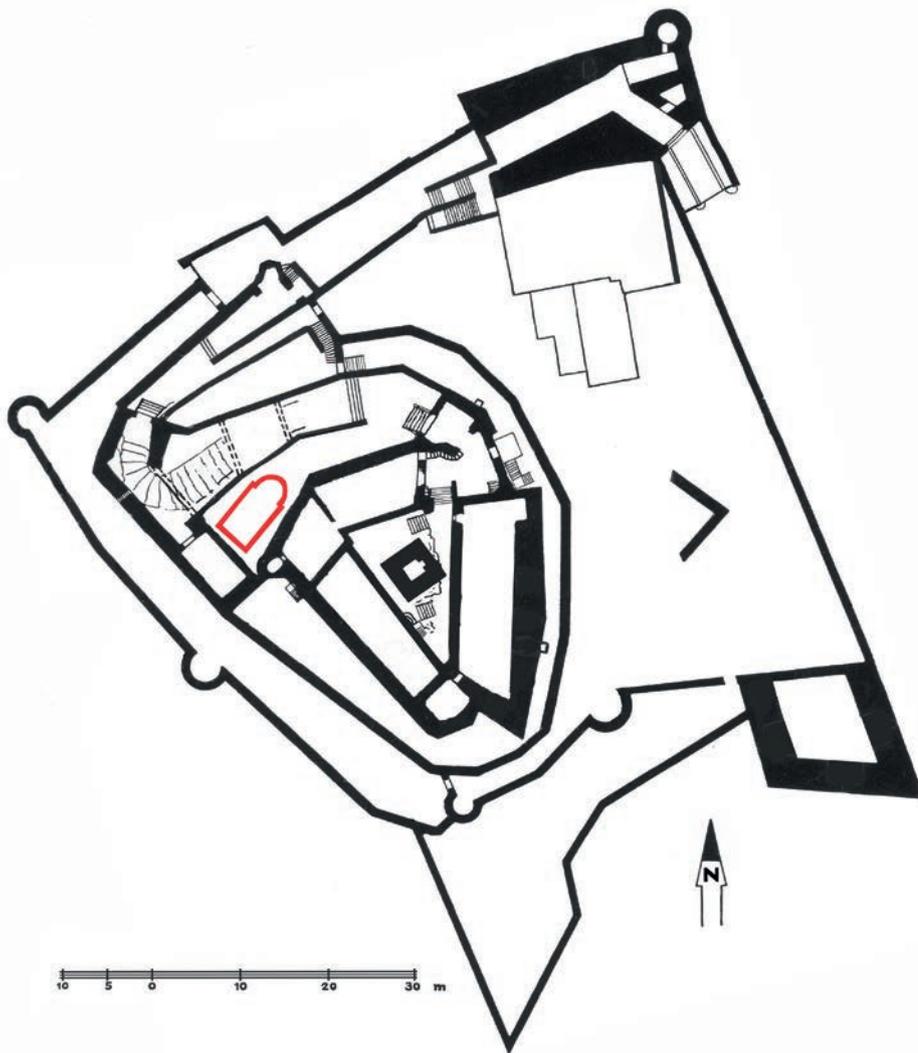
In the UNESCO World Heritage Site “Upper Middle Rhine Valley”, a castle can be found on average every 2.5 kilometres, with over 40 of them remaining more or less intact. However, the vast majority of these numerous castles, which can be seen along the riverbanks and hilltops, are relatively recent constructions and reconstructions of the 19th and 20th century. Over time, most medieval castles fell into disrepair and ruin due to destruction and abandon-

ment. During the 19th century Romantic era, many ruins were rebuilt and remodelled. Very few exceptions have survived the centuries without destruction, which today offer a glimpse back into previous centuries.

The value and the significance of Marksburg Castle, first mentioned in 1231 and the only hilltop castle along the Rhine which has never been destroyed, rests in its complete preservation as a

medieval fortress. With most buildings dating back from the 13th to 15th centuries, it allows us to travel back into the Middle Ages through the imposing stronghold with wall rings circling the watchtower, the residential buildings with rooms such as the castle kitchen, the great hall, the bedchamber, the chapel, the armoury, the wine cellar and the battlements, as well as baileys and bastions all on top of a hill above the small romantic town of Braubach.





In 2014, an archaeological excavation was carried out on the plateau between the Romanesque Palas and the cannon batteries, exposing the foundation walls of a Romanesque chapel which had originally belonged to the medieval building stock of Marksburg Castle. This building had been demolished in

the late 16th century, when the castle owner, the Landgrave of Hesse, had wanted to convert the castle into a fortress and needed space for an artillery battery. According to a preserved source, he therefore arranged to “demolish the old church on the Marksburg” in 1588.

The only image source that could give us an idea of the chapel construction is an engraving published by Matthäus Merian in 1646, which shows a saddle-back roof building inside the castle court. However, a problem arises from the fact that the Great Battery built in 1589 is displayed as well, though the chapel was already demolished in 1588. Both buildings never existed at the same time. The illustration therefore cannot be considered authentic. But since Merian often copied and combined older images, he would have referred to an older – unfortunately lost – depiction of Marksburg Castle.

The chapel is no longer shown on very detailed depictions of the castle from 1608; only the 1589 battery can be seen. The building, which was excavated in 2014, was confirmed to be the castle church demolished in 1588. It was discovered that this small church was five metres wide and nine metres long, including a rounded east apse. The structure was oriented northeast to



southwest due to the difficult topography. The entrance was in the north wall near the northwest corner. This type of church or chapel was common from the early Middle Ages into the early 13th century. The majority of chapels with rounded apses date back to the 11th and 12th centuries. As a rule, they used to be freestanding buildings.

Possibly after the demolition of this church, the room now presented as the castle chapel was set up in the south tower in 1588. The corbel stones of the Gothic vaults in this room are Romanesque and may have been transferred from the older chapel. After the exposure of the Romanesque findings, the site was then backfilled to protect them. In order to visualise the building for visitors on the guided tour and highlight its significance for the history of Marksburg Castle – its original name, *St. Markusburg*, may originate from the patron saint of this chapel – the castle administration decided to mark the outline of the foundation walls on the ground where the chapel stood.

In summer 2019, twelve young people from France, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, the Netherlands, Pakistan, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Sweden, Spain, Thailand and the United Kingdom took action at Marksburg Castle. The European Heritage Volunteers Project was overseen by the castle manager and the castle's architect and was actively supported by the castle's team of caretakers. The

group was accommodated at Philippsburg Palace in Braubach, also owned by the German Castles Association and the seat of its European Castles Institute.

As part of the task, the volunteers recreated the outline of the outer walls of the chapel with stone slabs in the battery yard, so interested visitors will be able to see the location and dimensions of this building which possibly pre-dates castle itself. For this purpose, a small ditch had to be dug in order to create a foundation that would give the stone slabs secure hold in the ground. Many wheelbarrows of soil had to be removed from the castle, while the stone slabs had to be carried in from outside to the excavation site. The project was a great success: After one week of work, the layout was finished, and the chapel was able to be included in the guided tour of the castle.

We have to thank the volunteers sincerely for their help, without which we would not have been able to carry out this project in this short a time frame and would have had to pay a higher cost. We hope that the volunteers enjoyed their stay and the work too, especially since it was a fully completed project – from the beginning to a successful final result, of which they can be proud.

■ *Gerhard Wagner*
*General Manager of the German
Castles Association and Managing
Director of Marksburg Castle*





STONE AGE BUILDING TECHNIQUES AT AN OPEN-AIR MUSEUM

Stone Age Park Dithmarschen · Germany

Reliving Stone Age construction

The Stone Age Park Dithmarschen, located in Albersdorf in the county of Dithmarschen in Schleswig-Holstein, Germany, is an archaeological open-air museum that integrates the surrounding landscape with the results of archaeological research. Since 1997, the park has developed on a plot of land over forty hectares in size, with nine original archaeological monuments aimed at capturing a prehistoric landscape. The Stone Age Park is part of the Archaeological-Ecological Centre Albersdorf, which consists of the Museum of Archaeology and Ecology Dithmarschen, a collection of original, on-site artefacts, as well as a reconstructed Stone Age settlement representing the early Mesolithic period through late Neolithic period.

The Stone Age Park aims to teach the public about the relationship between the natural environment and the development of the cultural landscape. It also wishes to gain public support for the protection of the region's natural and cultural inheritance, which is at risk today. The Stone Age Park attempts to teach people by integrating theory, practice, intellect and feelings. We believe that knowledge of the past which has been reflected upon can help us to understand the present and that as a result, the visitors will develop a desire to focus deeper on the presented topics.

The Stone Age Park is working toward lasting ecological, cultural, and business development as a certified educational centre in the region of Albersdorf. The park regularly supports archaeological and historical research, such as historical countryside research by the Institute for Ecosystem Research at the University of Kiel and pollen analyses and excavations of large stone graves and earthworks at Dieksknöll in cooperation with the Institute of Pre- and Proto-History at the University of Kiel within the framework of the multi-year project "Early monumentality and social differentiation". Additionally, the

entire park is available for archaeological experiments, such as simulated Stone Age living since 2004 in cooperation with the Archaeological Institute of the University of Hamburg or the experimental slash-and-burn of forest area since 2007. In the medium-term, a new educational centre with the project name "Stone Age House" is planned for the entrance area of the Stone Age Park.

In archaeological institutions like the Stone Age Park Dithmarschen, reconstructions of excavated structures as well as other archaeological findings are often displayed or used.



The scientific perception of prehistoric tools and their functions is often framed in a reductive evolutionary mindset, namely that complex tools developed over time from simple ones. The evolutionary perception of the tools is all too often uncritically transferred between groups of people who used the tools in different time periods. If culture is to be understood as a material expression of a functional adaptation to the environment, then there is a large probability that similar (living) environments in the past and present were and are similarly manipulated. But in order to create a hypothetical comparison between different cultural groups, a large enough amount of provable data should be presented through the formal analysis of finds and results. This can be done through detailed experimental models and replicas, as well as through analogies with indigenous peoples living today. This procedure prevents assumptions from being falsified and increases the likelihood of accuracy.

The Stone Age Park Dithmarschen strives to make it possible for groups of people – whether it be adults, children, or school groups – to have direct contact with ancient monuments and their proper “Stone Age” cultural landscapes. These include old forms of living in settlements, old breeds of domesticated animals, and many other perspectives into past ways of life. Ethnological precedents are also used

frequently in practical, pedagogical work. Using different types of tools and raw materials that were typical of the time, the Stone Age Park presents the daily work of Stone Age people in the most authentic way possible. Pedagogically acceptable copies of tools, equipment, structures and features are also created, occasionally influenced by ethnological precedents, all of which can make the historical relationships between life and nature more easily understood. Comprehension and understanding are some of the primary components in the way the park imparts knowledge.



Keeping in mind this scientific and educational background, the Stone Age Park carried out a European Heritage Volunteers Project which focused on construction of a wooden walkway which was based on Neolithic findings from a bog in Lower Saxony from around 2,000 B.C. Two-thirds of northern Germany was covered with bogs during the Stone Age, so a suitable means to cross them was a necessary condition for life at that time. Wooden walkways were an ideal solution, as

they formed a relatively solid surface, but did not sink into the swampy ground.

The walkway created during the project was designed to help visitors visualise this Stone Age technology more accurately. At the same time, it created a path to lead visitors from the Stone Age village area towards the forest area, which is to be converted into a Stone Age forest.

Firstly, the participants got a theoretical and practical introduction into Stone Age building techniques. Based on archaeological findings and known Stone Age techniques, participants made all components of the walkway themselves – including bearing beams, walkway planks, and wooden nails of various thicknesses, and carried out all working steps themselves. For efficiency, they used modern tools, except on one day, when the museum was heavily frequented by visitors. On this occasion, they used Stone Age tools in order to demonstrate them for the guests. Step by step, the walkway was built to a length of around twenty five meters.

In result, we determined that the walkway was an effective new feature in our archaeological open-air museum; thousands of visitors have walked on this path since then and experienced direct contact with the ancient past.

■ *Rüdiger Kelm*
Director
of Stone Age Park Dithmarschen



BUILDINGS & ENSEMBLES

When cultural heritage is mentioned, at first historic buildings and ensembles may come to a person's mind, since they are the most widespread and most visible category of cultural heritage. Thus, it is not surprising that they are also the most common field of volunteering for cultural heritage.

Volunteering is an ideal instrument to bring neglected or over-looked heritage sites back into the public eye. This may happen for different reasons: because a heritage site is in danger of falling into decay, because a heritage site which has so far been accessible to the public is endangered by privatisation, because important elements of a bigger heritage ensemble are at risk to become forgotten, or others.

As diverse as heritage sites are, so diverse are the approaches of volunteering for heritage and the structure of the engaged parties. There are small local initiatives engaged in a particular heritage site, as well as civil society associations engaged in a large-scale context, or associations which are transregionally engaged in a particular type of heritage. A special case are associations which do not engage practically but are key actors for the sustainable revitalisation of a heritage site by collecting funds, organising guided tours and cultural activities.

In most of the cases, voluntary, hands-on engagement can be only the first step to draw the public's attention to a

heritage site or its state of conservation, and more substantial measures must follow. But sometimes interventions on a voluntary base become the starting point of a long and sustainable process, of substantial and responsible activities for the rescue, preservation and revitalisation of a heritage site.

In fact, there are lot of challenges for voluntary engagement with historic buildings – beginning with legal ownership issues in the case of abandoned heritage sites over construction and heritage regulations, the formal professional qualifications needed for most of the interventions, and safety challenges when working at structurally endangered buildings or the high financial costs needed in most cases.

But when well-planned and carefully implemented, there still remain a lot of opportunities for hands-on engagement. Since the legal frame strongly differs from country to country, the potential for practical interventions by volunteers is quite different, too.

Emergency and protective measures often do not require the same legal level as conservation interventions since they're helping to prevent the total loss of the site. Often, volunteers can also be directly involved in conservation measures when they are led by a legally qualified person – an architect, master of handicraft or other in accordance to the particular regulations – and when



this person overtakes the responsibility for the professional level and the quality of the interventions, similarly to being employed in this person's enterprise.

In cases where this approach is not wished or not possible, there remain a lot of opportunities to support conservation interventions – preparation measures like digging the ground, supporting activities like transporting material, cleaning tiles for their later reuse, and more. A very appropriate field is the engagement for the environment of a heritage site, as well as for historic gardens and parks, due to the comparably easy tasks and the large amount of perennial maintenance works.

European Heritage Volunteers organises projects at historic buildings which are preferably in danger, and at neglected or over-looked parts of bigger ensembles. At the same time, the organisation aims to illustrate the diversity and the richness of tangible cultural heritage when choosing heritage sites in different categories for interventions, as well as to support the initiatives, associations and institutions engaged with these heritage sites.



CONSERVATION OF AN ENDANGERED CHURCH

Himara · Albania

How conservation measures at a church can inspire a community

Himara is located in south Albania, on the coast of the Ionian Sea. Of all the settlements in the region which have been preserved since antiquity, Himara is the largest one. In antiquity, Himara was the capital of the region and home to a population known as the Chaonians, who flourished in the 5th century B.C. Himara Castle, of which only ruined walls remain, is perched atop a 140-meter hill and is afforded natural protection. The Old City is located within the walls of the former fortress and includes several churches and other medieval buildings; meanwhile the majority of the residential buildings date back to the 18th and 19th centuries.

The Church of St. Sergiu and St. Bacchu was built at the highest point of the village. A stone, since lost to time and marked with the year 786, provides a potential date for the church's construction, though most of the church's structure is from the 11th century. For a long time, the church was the seat of the diocese of Himara, which was established in 1020. The church consists of a nave with a semi-circular apse in the east, decorated with a large fresco, a part later added in the west, and a bell-tower in the southeast corner. The church walls retain traces of numerous reconstructions – the lower parts of the walls still date back to the original construction, while the upper parts are younger. The iconostasis, decorated

with floral motifs, is not wooden, but rather made from stone – a feature specific to the region.

Due to the significant depopulation of the Old City and the fact that another church in the Old City is still in use, the Church of St. Sergiu and St. Bacchu lacked maintenance and had been critically endangered: the roof construction was partly broken, the roofing dilapidated – rain could freely fall into the building, exposing the walls, the iconostasis, and the frescos to water damage.



This was why the church had been chosen as the site for the first European Heritage Volunteers Project in Albania. The idea of a volunteer project for young heritage professionals in Albania had been jointly initiated by the *Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ)* and European Heritage Volunteers, and ultimately resulted in a remarkable collaboration of stakeholders from Germany and Albania.

Since the GIZ had an ongoing overall project aiming for sustainable development in the southern coastal region of Albania, it was natural to choose this region for the project. During a field trip, representatives of the GIZ, European Heritage Volunteers, the Institute of Cultural Monuments of Albania and the Regional Directorate of National Culture Vlora visited eight potential heritage sites in the region, out of which the Church of St. Sergiu and St. Bacchu was jointly selected. The reasons for this final selection were the church's historic and architectonic value, its endangered but not hopeless state, and the fact that the amount of necessary interventions was large, but still manageable within the short time frame of just two weeks. Last but not least, the church's iconic significance for the whole area provided hope that interventions at this site might cause follow-up activities in Himara or the greater region.

Over the course of just two weeks, the collaboration of three Albanian craftsmen and fifteen international participants achieved a remarkable result: the roof construction of the church was completely dismantled, the upper parts of the walls consolidated and – while replacing damaged parts of the construction – the roof construction re-erected. The roof was covered by wooden planks and then recovered



with historic tiles. The project relied on traditional regional building methods – using cypress trees as timber for the ceiling beams from an area nearby, applying traditionally manufactured lime-based mortar, and reusing original tiles when possible, supplementing them when necessary with tiles salvaged from ruins in the region.

A particular challenge was the limited accessibility of the site. The fortress can't be reached by car; therefore, all tools, scaffolding, and building material had to be transported manually uphill over several hundred meters through very narrow streets and staircases.

The project resonated particularly strongly among the local population, who took an active interest in the conservation process and supported the project in various ways. It culminated in the inauguration of a new bell, for which the local community had spontaneously decided to collect money during the project, and a poignant inauguration ceremony.

■ **Bert Ludwig**
*Director
of European Heritage Volunteers*

The bells of Himara ring again

In September 2018, fifteen of us arrived in Albania ready to work on Himara's church for two weeks. It was an incredible experience for all of us from the very beginning to the very end, with the meandering bus ride from Tirana along the coast. Alone the landscape of mountains and coast, the stone architecture, and the narrow and steep little streets are enough to take your breath away. So, from the very beginning, we felt motivated to be there, help the community and do all the hard work necessary.

What I did not expect at all was the immense involvement of such a small community. First with the accommodation: we had to stay in two different guest houses as we were such a big group. In my case, we stayed with a lovely grandmother who made us homemade doughnuts for breakfast every morning and did everything she could to make sure we were comfortable and enjoying our stay. It felt like something out of a film to be eating doughnuts facing the sea in such a beautiful landscape. And then the food – the amazing food – that a restaurant downtown was bringing us! Every day they came to the village for lunch and dinner, setting up tables in a small café. One day we even got an invitation to go to their restaurant downtown, and another day they brought us lunch at the beach. I think

during those two weeks all of us became addicted to traditional Greek food. Not to mention the involvement of the village's small café, which made space for our big group and even organised two small parties for us – the first one after our first week with a small traditional music concert, and the second on our last night.

But not everything was food and concerts. Every day we would wake up early and climb up to that small church to work. It is one of the most beautiful places I have seen: on the top of a hill, surrounded on one side by abandoned and ruined houses and on the other by a cliff. The church stands there with its amazing frescoes and paintings, welcoming everyone who climbs up.

We were not working alone; there were three Albanian craftsmen working with us. The work was not easy – even though it was the end of September, it was over 30 degrees every day, so we had to work really early in the morning and in the evening to avoid the sunniest hours. We were lucky to have the beach so close, where we could go to escape the heat and recharge our energy during the break.

Working conditions were not the only difficulty. As I said, the church was on top of the hill, so we needed to bring the materials up. We had the help of two

donkeys to bring up the really heavy materials, such as the mortar or the high number of tiles we needed. But the most challenging and difficult part was to bring the new beams for the roof uphill – actually, they were small trees. So, in groups of six to eight persons, we started climbing up armed with helmets and gloves, sometimes with the help of the



small children of the village who were running around guiding us or trying to help. What seemed almost impossible was doable in the end thanks to the great teamwork of everyone involved.

It was also challenging to be up on the roof for the whole process, from removing the old tiles, taking down the old beams and bringing up the new ones, and placing the new tiles. Additionally, we were preparing the mortar, checking the old tiles to see which ones could be used again, cleaning the surrounding ruins, and bringing up new material and taking down the old one, and we even went down to explore and document the small catacombs. At some point, it felt impossible to finish the restoration of a roof construction and the roofing in ten working days, but we did it. I cannot express the feelings of accomplishment and reward; we were all very emotional on the last day, as we were able to work inside the church, cleaning the icons from the dirt under the roof we had built.

And once the church was finished it was time to give it back to the community, although the fact that we were working there hadn't stopped locals and tourists from coming to see us on the previous days, and even entering the church on some occasions. The last thing we did in the church was to install a new bell. The bell was bought by the local community, as some of them told us the church hadn't had a

bell since the 1960s. So, the last evening after work, we went up one last time, together with the locals, the representatives of the authorities and everyone that was involved in the project. After the inauguration ceremony, two volunteers together with two small children rang the bell for the first time after decades. After them, everyone wanted to go and make it ring and be part of this emotional and historical moment. Then, we all entered the church. At the entrance the old ladies gave homemade bread to everyone, on the inside they were lighting the icons' candles.



Personally, I cannot emphasise enough the satisfaction and feeling of reward I had from being part of this project – not only for being able to finish the work on time, but for how our work helped to bring back part of their heritage and history, how it revitalised this small community, and the emotion on their faces when they heard the bell ringing again and when they entered the church.

■ *Paula O'Donohoe Villota*
Group Coordinator



VALORISATION OF MINING HERITAGE

Markus Röhling Mine · Annaberg-Buchholz · Germany

From medieval times to present – wooden hand winches

Located in the Erzgebirge/Krušnohoří (Ore Mountains), the Annaberg-Frohnau Mining Landscape is one of the 22 components of the World Heritage site Erzgebirge/Krušnohoří Mining Region, which collectively represents the most significant mining heritage, both above and below ground, of the distinctive Ore Mountain cultural region. The contribution of this part of the outstanding universal value of the Ore Mountains is represented by key heritage sites, including the *Markus-Röhling-Stolln* mine, which documents important mining activities from the 18th to 20th centuries. The mine is located in the Frohnau silver mining landscape that is intimately associated with the mining town of Annaberg and characterised by a large number of historic mines from the late 15th to 20th centuries. Mining ceased here at the end of the 19th century but resumed in 1948 in connection with uranium exploration. These efforts did not result in the extraction of any significant amounts of uranium ore and mining finally ceased. Surface buildings of the former mines are only preserved at the *Malwine* and the *Markus-Röhling-Stolln* mines.

The *Markus-Röhling-Stolln* was the most important mine in this area. It includes the adit and underground galleries of silver and cobalt mining from the 18th and the 19th centuries, together with wheel chambers, a winch

chamber, various machine rooms and uranium mining galleries of the 20th century. In 1978, local miners started to reopen the *Markus-Röhling-Stolln* to make it accessible to the public. Since 1990, work has been undertaken by the *Markus-Röhling-Stolln Frohnau* Mining Association. In 1994, after extensive works underground, the *Markus-Röhling-Stolln* was opened as a visitor's mine. It continues to be operated and maintained by the mining association until today.

The aim of the mining association is to preserve this example of 500 years of mining history and historic mining technologies to visitors. Consequently, to enhance the visitor's step-by-step experience, new parts of the mine were re-opened and historic technologies are displayed in their original locations to improve the underground presentation. Today, the visitor enters via mine locomotive through the portal of the former uranium adit. The tour guides the visitor through different mining periods from more recent uranium mining, including original still-functioning machinery, to workings of the historic silver and cobalt mining periods. Ore- and water-hoisting technologies are demonstrated by several wheel chambers, including a reconstructed nine-metre-high waterwheel and a so-called winch chamber, where ore was manually hoisted from deeper workings.



The European Heritage Volunteers Project was organised at the *Markus-Röhling-Stolln* mine in order to support the ongoing efforts of the association to valorize the historic mining heritage. The project was mainly organised by the Saxon World Heritage Coordination in close cooperation with the Institute for Industrial Archaeology and History of Science and Technology of the *Technische Universität Bergakademie Freiberg* and the local mining association. The focus of the project was the reconstruction of a historic four-man winch that was originally in the mine but had to be removed due to rot. The continuous maintenance of historic wooden structures was always required due to the conditions underground. Moreover, the reconstruction of wooden installations such as waterwheels and hand winches make historic mining technologies more understandable for visitors today. The original locations are recognised through existing chambers or historic working platforms where the miner stood, kneeled or sat, and are marked by rectangular notches cut out of the stone.

Fourteen volunteers from across the world – including the Czech Republic, Germany, India, Kosovo, Portugal, Mexico, South Korea, Turkey and others – took part in the project. The work was supervised by a local master carpenter and a local retired barrel-maker who trained the participants in traditional mining-relevant craft techniques. The



works took place below and above ground. Below ground, the participants could get a first-hand impression of the harsh working conditions in a highly authentic environment: narrow spaces, high humidity, long walking distances and manual transportation to the original sites. All works, including all safety aspects, were approved by the Saxon Chief Mining Office and the heritage protection authorities.

The preparation of the wooden parts of the hand winch took place outside of the mine. A challenge was the exact measurement that was required to ensure the parts of the winch prepared above

ground could be later installed underground. Therefore, during the preparation of the project, the carpenter researched the original dimensions from historic drawings in close cooperation with local mining experts. The stage holes, the measurement of which required a great deal of effort, were hewn into the rock initially by hand with hammer and pick to reproduce the miners' historical work and finished with a drill hammer. The processing of the wood took place by hand, including the manual preparation of the beams.

A special task was the production of a wooden hoisting bucket that was used

underground to haul up the ore. The preserved metal fittings of the old hoisting bucket were restored and reused. An eighty-four-years-old specialist, one of the last barrel-making masters in Saxony, trained the volunteers in this traditional craft technique and taught them the basic aspects of his specific craft.

Finally, after all parts were prepared, the pieces had to be transported underground and reassembled at the original site. Materials and tools were first transported 600 metres into the mine by train and then over a distance of 200 metres by hand along narrow passages. The mine was open to the public at all times and all logistics had to be organised accordingly.

An important aspect of the project was the transfer of knowledge of the traditional craftsmen's techniques, which are required in the field of mining heritage. The project demonstrated that thorough research is required to prepare the historic woodworks and that nowadays some techniques can only be passed from elder generations. The exchange of this knowledge is a key strength of the European Heritage Volunteers Projects. The preservation of the intangible heritage of handcrafts and traditional craftsmanship plays a crucial role for authentic future presentation of the historic mining heritage.

To further discuss this issue, a public event under the topic "Mining heritage

and traditional craftsmanship" was organised, which included presentations of industrial and mining heritage sites worldwide by the project participants. Along with representatives of the heritage protection authorities, the Chamber of Crafts, mining associations and craftsmen, the importance of traditional craftsmanship for future preservation was discussed and clearly demonstrated that there is a need for action, particularly in the training of craftsmen. In addition, the public must be made aware of the necessary craft techniques and their importance for the long-term protection and preservation of the mining heritage sites and the sustainable development of the region.

As a result, the European Heritage Volunteers Project clearly demonstrated the strong interest, enthusiasm, and engagement among young people worldwide in preserving historic mining sites. To engage young people, particular conditions are required, such as the determination of specific projects and tasks, as well as a certain degree of learning outcome that increases their competencies and skills. The intercultural exchange and dialogue between the generations and across borders strengthens knowledge and increases the awareness of the importance of industrial heritage sites.

■ *Friederike Hansell,
Katharina Jesswein & Marc Schwan*





CONSERVATION OF A TRADITIONAL WOODEN CHURCH

Zekhnova · Kenozero National Park · Russia

Experiencing traditional wooden architecture in the Russian North

The Kenozero National Park is a territory where among the dense forests and marshes, man and nature continue to coexist harmoniously, preserving the unique features of the archetypal Russian way of life, its culture and traditions. Local people do not leave this place, and travelers still come here to touch the history.

Kenozero National Park was established in 1991. It is situated in the south-west of the Arkhangelsk Region. The maximum distance from the south to the north is 72 kilometers, from the west to the east 27 kilometers. Kenozero National Park is a specially protected natural area – it's a witness to the prehistoric human inhabitants, something that has preserved the centuries-old history and culture of the Russian North. Evidence of this is preserved in natural complexes and objects, numerous monuments of material and spiritual culture, architecture, murals, archaeology, iconography, and rich ethnographic material.

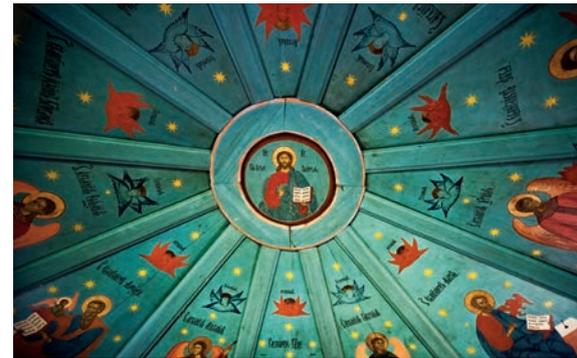
The natural and cultural complex of Kenozero essentially enriches the spirit of the culture of the Russian North. The quality of composition in the objects of cultural heritage is unrivalled. This is the territory that preserved the organic interaction of pre-Christian and Christian cultures to the fullest, in both the monuments and way of life of

the population. The Kenozero National Park is a striking example of the balanced and harmonious coexistence of man and nature, the mutual influence and exchange of environment and culture. The specific mission of the park consists of preservation, exploration, and promotion of the tangible and intangible natural and cultural heritage of the Russian North. Since 2004, Kenozero National Park has been a part of the UNESCO World Network of Biosphere Reserves.

Kenozero National Park is the only natural protected area of Russia containing architectural monuments, including masterpieces of wooden architecture from the 17th and 18th centuries – ten churches and a bell tower, thirty-three wooden chapels and two water mills.

Kenozero National Park is known throughout Russia and beyond due to the high quantity of well-preserved painted “heavens” in churches and chapels. These are unique patterns of monumental painting of which there is no comparison in the world. Kenozero National Park has the biggest collection of this special type of heritage in Russia, with seventeen total “heavens”.

When Kenozero National Park was established most of its monuments were in a poor condition, a situation that took years to overcome.





The beginning of volunteers' era at Kenozero National Park started at the Pochozerskiy Churchyard from the 18th century. It is a masterpiece of Russian wooden architecture and one of the five three-piece complexes preserved in Russia. Despite their status of a federal-level cultural heritage monument, by the early 1980s, the two churches and the bell tower of the Pochozerskiy ensemble had nearly fallen into decay. In the mid-1980s, a team of students conducted rescue interventions, which began a conservation and restoration process which lasted several decades and was finalised in 2017. Now this church stands in all its grandeur on a high ridge again, separating the two lakes against the Northern sky, its bell chimes ringing out in the air above Lake Kenozero like they did centuries ago.

The turning point for the Kenozero National Park in terms of the development of voluntary work was in 2010 when a volunteer programme was developed. The cooperation between the park and two volunteer centres in Moscow played an important role. They invented a clear system for organising volunteering projects, which Kenozero National Park is still following and developing every year. Volunteers help in conservation and restoration works, as well as to maintain the chapels and churches in the national park.

Technicians from the Department of Construction and Restoration conduct annual monitoring of all monuments in



the National Park. According to monitoring and tracking of conditions, they decide which monuments need conservation interventions in the coming year and which monuments will be restored the year after. During the monitoring, the technicians undertake a technical evaluation of the monument and prepare a work plan. Afterwards it is decided which works will be carried out by specialists and which ones – under the guidance of architects and carpenters – by volunteers.

In 2019, Kenozero National Park began collaborating with European Heritage Volunteers in order to strengthen the international aspect of the volunteering activities. Within the framework of a European Heritage Volunteers Project, conservation works of the Chapel of St. Apostle John the Evangelist in Zekhnova village were conducted.

Zekhnova village is located in the northern area of Lake Kenozero. It is situated on an almost uninhabited island, in a territory isolated from the outside world. Only three people and several dogs live here – the trip from Moscow takes seventeen hours by train, plus three hours by car and finally a ride by boat. But the village is not totally abandoned – travellers, artists and culture lovers regularly come to the island.

The Chapel St. Apostle John the Evangelist is located in the centre of Zekhnova village, near the remains of the sacred

pine grove with 200-year-old trees. It was mentioned for the first time in 1846, but it originally dates back to the 18th century – the exact date of its foundation is uncertain.

In 1982, when a team of student volunteers carried out accident-prevention and conservation work in the region, they worked also at the chapel of St. Apostle John the Evangelist. In 1998 and 1999, for the first-ever time in Russia, a team of Russian and Norwegian



experts conducted a one-of-a-kind operation to lift the church, using a dedicated technology that involved partial replacement of some lower rows of logs without removing them all. In 2008, a team of local carpenters performed a series of restoration works on the bell tower and the roofing.

Nevertheless, there were still interventions needed in order to preserve the chapel, which was the purpose of the European Heritage Volunteers Project. During the project, work on several parts of the chapel was carried out: the roof construction as well as the supporting beams for the dome were partially replaced, corrective action was taken on the bell tower and the porch, and finally, the wooden shingles on the main roof and the roof of the porch were partially replaced.

The work needed excellent logistic preparation. Since Zekhnova is only accessible from the mainland by boat, all the material had to be transported in advance, which demanded forethought and detailed planning.

During the project, participants had the opportunity to learn about traditional carpentry techniques and tools. They learned ways of marking and replacing logs, as well as other traditional wood processing technologies.

Upon finishing the work, the team of volunteers wrote their names on



the *okhlupen* – the upper, concluding beam of the roof, which is a typical element of the traditional wooden architecture in the Russian North.

The educational programme was completed with guided tours and excursions illustrating the richness, variety, and vulnerability of traditional architecture in the region. The international team returned home with traditional handmade souvenirs: birch salt cellars and “doll-wards” – miniature felt boots made of sheep wool.

In the coming years, other European Heritage Volunteers Projects will be organised – starting at the bell tower of Zekhnova church and the water mill in the village, and later continuing at other heritage sites with wooden architecture of the Russian North.

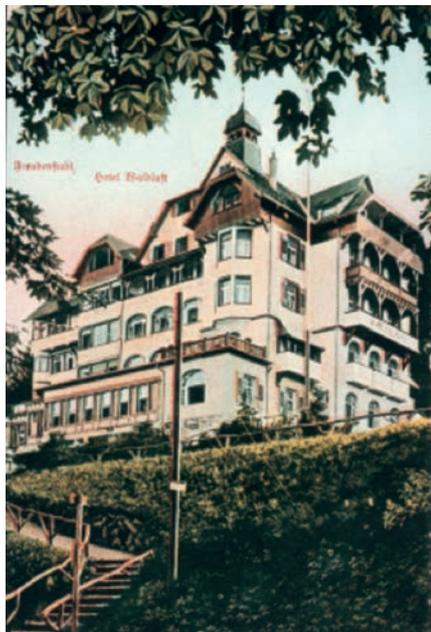
■ *Nadezhda Fomina*
Ecological Education Department
at Kenozero National Park



**CONSERVATION OF AN ENDANGERED FORMER HOTEL
AND THE SURROUNDING PARK**

Former Hotel "Waldlust" · Freudenstadt · Germany

The reawakening of a former grand hotel



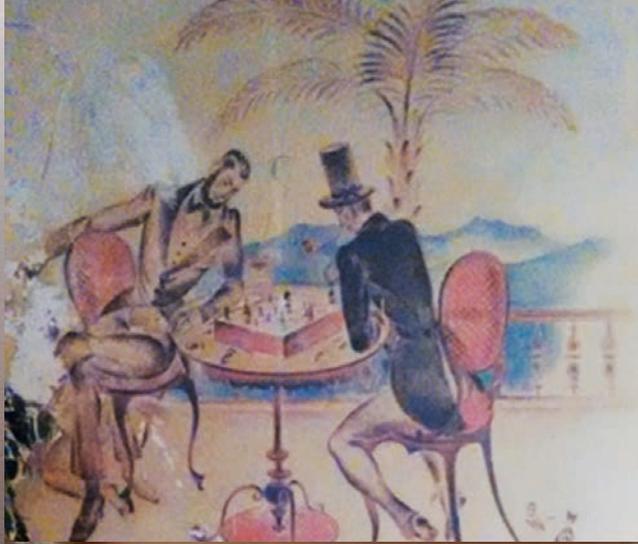
The “Waldlust” grand hotel in Freudenstadt, once renowned as the most beautiful located hotel in the Black Forest region, was a highly esteemed resort among spa guests from noble society. Planned in 1899, established in 1900, and expanded in 1903, today it represents not only a unique symbol of spa history, but also a splendid example of the “Belle Époque”-architecture at the beginning of 20th century and a rich treasury of cultural heritage. From 1903 until the Second World War, the hotel had an outstanding career as a resort of many world-famous guests. Kings, queens, princes and poets, artists and

the international jet set, the leading stars of world community, showed up and made Hotel “Waldlust” a glamorous catwalk for high society. Literally, it became for the city of Freudenstadt, this formerly booming spa resort, a “door to the widened world”.

Today, the impressive scenery and embedded “personal” history of the old palace hotel give people an image of its former heyday, mostly due to the efforts of the *Denkmalverein Freudenstadt* (Freudenstadt Heritage Association). The hotel enterprise closed in 2005 and the heritage site fell into complete oblivion. No authority, neither the private real estate owner nor the local community, would undertake any measures for safety and preservation. Therefore,

members of the *Denkmalverein Freudenstadt* started with their now fourteen-year-long “Save the Waldlust” initiative. This full-scale project includes many practical tasks like rooftop repairing, water containment and other conservation efforts, as well as the securing of artworks, the research of the fascinating hotel history and the organisation of political and public interest. Beyond guided tours and special events, the newly formed *Denkmalfreunde Waldlust* (Friends of Waldlust Association) has made great strides in utilising the splendid and increasingly famous “lost place” site. That ranges from the support of festivities and celebrations, wedding parties, and even includes a popular new business venture: an overnight stay in a heritage location.





Three seasons of European Heritage Volunteers Projects, in 2017, 2018 and 2019, made another important contribution towards the revitalisation of an endangered historic place of interest. The main part of these projects focused on restoring and cultivating parts of the historic hotel park. Due to long-term negligence and the closing of all infrastructure within the last fourteen years, the unique type of hillside garden on the “Waldlust” property has become over-grown by wilderness. The hillside promenades once offered the upper-class spa guests a delicate path for leisure walks and charming retreats into the fascinating scenery of the Black Forest. Under the advisory and assistance of the local heritage association, the volunteers made a sweep through the hidden, century-old structures and even uncovered the staircases of an 1892 handcrafted water suspension system, which combines technical spirit as well as art historical construction value.

The other part of the voluntary work aimed at the heritage site itself. In 2018, one group documented the interior of



Hotel “Waldlust”, and in 2019, a group succeeded in recovering a once famous and legendary night club and bar area on the ground floor of “Waldlust”. From 1951 until 1975, the “Zwitscherstube” became a highly esteemed gathering point for many guests from the whole region. Nevertheless, the more recent owners replaced the atmospheric bar with an unsentimental conference hall structure. Within one week the original decor of the old club reappeared, much to the delight of many visitors past and present.

Restoration of the historical park and the so-called “return of the *Zwitscherstube*” not only reveal what the place stood for during its golden era, these measures also give new energy to the goal of rescuing the grand hotel by halting the ongoing decline and preventing its total devastation. The clearing of pathways in “Waldlust” park, the maintenance of stone-walls, and the unveiling of romantic sites and scenery spots garner sympathy and public support to the heritage task as well as serving a very practical purpose. Also, the clearance of the historic



hotel park opens up splendid, panoramic views of the old building – which supports the idea that a heritage place which is not seen or recognised is hardly endangered.

What are the future objectives of this grand hotel preservation initiative? First, the association *Denkmalfreunde Waldlust* wants to maintain the building and grounds in fairly good condition. This can only be realised through various activities like providing opportunities for urban exploration and “lost place” photography, filming and video making, organising and managing events, conventions and privately hosted festivities. Or even, as already mentioned, Hotel “Waldlust” has gotten into business again – albeit in a limited capacity. In this sense, Hotel “Waldlust” is trying to become an exciting spot, which spurs fantasy and vision.

On the one hand, success or failure depend on managing the transformation of the privately-owned, “forgotten” place into a publicly held creative centre serving a large variety of needs and ambitions. On the other hand, this project is about the hardware itself: a 120-year-old building. It could be the “take off” of an intelligent, long-lasting, carefully undertaken, heritage-oriented conservation and reconstruction.

■ *Siegfried Schmidt*
Board member
of *Freudenstadt Heritage Association*



**CONSERVATION OF A CHURCH FROM 14TH CENTURY
AND SURROUNDING MONUMENTS**

Zorats Church · Yeghegis · Armenia

Preserving Armenian heritage through history immersion

Armenians living abroad have two homelands – no matter where they reside, they will always feel the longing for their motherland. To dispel that longing, millions of Armenians from all over the world return to breathe the air of Armenia, rich from monuments with thousands of years of history. Tourists, too, are drawn to the centuries-old history of Armenia that is reflected in ancient architectural monuments, high-relief churches, and monuments built of fine stone.

It is not said for nothing that Armenia is an open-air museum that can be studied endlessly. The country's landscape is distinguished by its unique beauty and rich history. And in spite of its small space, unique monuments of world-wide importance continue to be found in Armenia.

Ultimately, we all have the aim to serve as an example to the world. Every nation is obliged to preserve and restore its cultural heritage because architecture is a cornerstone of culture that reflects the history of all peoples, as well as their ancestors' moral standards.

The “Service for the Preservation of Historical Environment and Cultural Museums-Reservations” of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of the Republic of Armenia occupies the highest position in this patriotic

affair. Its mission is to preserve the monuments that have been inherited for centuries and to contribute to their awareness raising.

To this end, the institution has been cooperating with European Heritage Volunteers since 2017. In 2018, part of the Armenian delegation presented the tradition of *khachkars* at “*denkmal*”, Europe's Leading Trade Fair for Conservation, Restoration and Old Building Renovation, in collaboration with European Heritage Volunteers. *Khachkars* are cross-stones made from a special stone-carving technique and are valued as important immaterial heritage of Armenia. In 2010, they were inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity.

During the conference “Volunteering for European cultural heritage”, which took place within the framework of the “*denkmal*”, the delegation of the “Service for the Preservation of Historical Environment and Cultural Museums-Reservations” presented the proposal for a European Heritage Volunteers Project at Zorats Church in the Yeghegis community in the Vayots Dzor province of Armenia.

Yeghegis was one of the prominent medieval settlements of the Syunik province. From the first decades of the 9th

century to the middle of the 17th century, it was the political centre of Vayots Dzor canton within the Syunik province, playing an important role in the political, socio-economic and cultural life. The city was particularly noticeable between the 12th and 14th centuries, when the Orbelian Dynasty ruled in Vayots Dzor. In this period, Yeghegis was one of the prominent settlements of Syunik, mentioned in manuscripts from the canton of Vayots Dzor under the name *Gavar Yeghegis*, or “Land that is called Yeghegis”.

St. Astvatsatsin Zorats Church is located on the eastern edge of the village of Yeghegis, on a low hill. The church is built of light blue basalt; its structure rises on a two-stage foundation and ends with a double-inclined roof. The architectural composition is an unusual one – there's no hall; instead there is a square located in front of the church. The width is larger than the depth, 10.6 metres to 5.7 metres. The altar space, which is located in the eastern part, next to the side sacristies, is divided into three sections by two arch columns. The central part of the western wall is occupied by three broad arches, from which the altar is visible from the outside. On the one-metre tall stage the Holy Table is located. The semi-round altar space has one window in the centre, which narrows as it extends outwards. The centre of the western section

features a similar window. Both sacristies have openings on the western side, and each has a window from the east, three niches, a small altar and a low stage. The northern sacristy has access to the stage.

On the southern façade of the church, a sun clock is sculptured; on the upper edges of the eastern façade there are signs of eternity, one on each edge. The eastern façade has two triangular niches, on the ends of which there are semi-circular crowns. The central window is enclosed in a high-relief cross-section. Several inscriptions have been preserved on the walls of the church. According to one of them, the church was built in the beginning of the 14th century upon the request of Syunik Metropolitan Bishop, Stepanos Tarsayich. At the western front there are three small *khachkars*, made in the medieval period.



The church is surrounded by a cemetery which contains several dozen tombstones and *khachkars*. The church, cemetery and remains of all other nearby monuments are enclosed by walls. The walls are around one and a half metres thick and have been preserved up to a height of around two metres. They are arranged in large, crude basalt pieces. The wall's main gateway is on the east side and is constructed of two large basalt stones with a large stone laid perpendicular across them.

Excavations in the area directly north of the church indicate that a writing centre operated here. The excavated rooms are interconnected with each other through internal doors and brick shelves on the walls suggest manuscript storage.

The monument's composition is totally unique in Armenia, leading some scholars to believe it was intended as a place

where troops could pray before leaving for war, hence the name *zorats* church, meaning “soldiers church”.

Despite the vegetation growing on the roof, endangering the stone plates with their roots, the church was in quite good condition, but the other parts of the ensemble were highly endangered. The cemetery has long been out of use since a new cemetery at the edge of the village was installed, so the gravestones and *khachkars* on the area surrounding the church were neglected – partly covered by vegetation, partly broken, partly scattered throughout the area. The surrounding walls and the entrances to the area were in various conditions: some parts were in a good state, some were endangered by plants and others in high risk due to collapse immediately. The remaining walls of the former surrounding buildings were partially in good condition, but the majority of the rooms underground were structurally damaged or endangered by structural damages, due to the pressure of the earth above, water infiltration and erosion.

Starting from this situation, a European Heritage Volunteers Project was organised to document and conserve the ensemble, while simultaneously raising awareness about the particular site among the local population and promoting Armenian cultural heritage in general among young heritage professionals from all over Europe.

The project took place in 2019 and brought together fifteen young participants from nine countries, among them five local participants from the Vayots Dzor province. The project focussed on three topics – the documentation of the tombstones and the *khachkars* in the cemetery, conservation work on the walls of the former buildings of the ensemble and interventions at the church and surrounding walls in order to avoid further damage.

For the documentation, which was led by a young Serbian architect from the European Heritage Volunteers network, first a plan of the cemetery was produced. Since plans of the area did not exist, photos made by a drone were used as a base to establish an exact plan, marking the location of the gravestones and the *khachkars*. Finally, every gravestone and *khachkar* was photographically documented and described verbally including a description of its damages. The documentation shall serve as a tool to define later conservation measures.

The work at the remains of the former buildings in the north – the writing centre – was led by a local master builder in collaboration with a young Bulgarian architect from the European Heritage Volunteers network, both with experience in dry stone walling. The aim of the interventions was to preserve the existing walls by eliminating plants and roots and repairing endangered parts,

as well as to clarify the structures of the former buildings by conserving the walls to a level just above the earth's surface and replacing stones which had been fallen down.

Finally, protective measures were undertaken: The plants which were growing under and on the roof of the church, which had created the danger that the stone plates covering the roof could burst, were removed in order to prevent rain and snow from damaging the building. At the eastern gate to the cemetery, which had not been accessible for safety reasons, the replacement of an enormous upper stone weighing several tons was undertaken, moving it from its highly precarious position back to its original position so that it was no longer in danger of falling down.

Besides the practical work, the participants presented comparable religious heritage sites of their own countries that are in need of conservation, as well as approaches and practices for their rescue and conservation.

The rich educational programme made the participants familiar with the long, rich history of the country and included visits to various heritage sites in the region, such as the St. Astvatsatsin Church in Areni village, Noravank Monastery and Selim Caravansarai. Additionally, participants made a one-day excursion to heritage sites in other regions of Armenia, like Sevanavank

Monastery and Noratus cemetery, which contains the highest number of preserved *khachkars* worldwide.

The Armenian participants introduced the others to the essence of Armenian culture, language, and lifestyle. At the wine factory, they tasted local wine, in the bakery they baked the traditional Armenian *lavash*, and they even had a traditional Armenian dinner at one of the Armenian participant's house.

In summary, the first European Heritage Volunteers Project in Armenia was a complete success, as it did not only contribute to heritage conservation, but also to the exchange of experience between locals, activists and young heritage professionals from all over the world. It provided a solid basis to for similar projects in the following years.

■ *Serob Hunanyan*
Service for the Protection
of Historical Environment
and Cultural Museums-Reservations





**MIDDLE AGE BUILDING TECHNIQUES
AT AN OPEN-AIR MUSEUM**

Museum Village Düppel · Berlin · Germany

Thatch and shingles - Offering multiple perspectives of „the past“

In 1939, a boy called Horst Trzeciak was playing on a piece of land on the outskirts of Berlin. While playing, he found a number of pottery shards and handed them into a museum. In the 1960s, archaeologists working in the western part of Berlin began researching the medieval colonisation of Berlin and Brandenburg. While investigating potential sites for research excavations, they came across the shards found in 1939. As the shards could be dated to the medieval period around 1200 AD, the site was deemed suitable for better understanding the change in settlement patterns during that period. From 1967, the site was excavated as part of a project by the *Deutsche Forschungsgesellschaft*, the German Research Association.

During the early medieval period, large parts of eastern and central Germany were occupied by Slavic populations. During the early 12th century, Western bishops and dukes planned a crusade to christianise and conquer the Slavic territories. In 1157, Albert the Bear of the House of Ascania took over Brandenburg Castle and became the first Margrave of Brandenburg. The christianisation and assimilation of the Slavs was characterised by violence. In order to cultivate the scarcely populated regions, settlers from western Germany were brought in. It was this process of assimilation that the archaeologists

hoped could be clarified through the excavation of the former village Düppel.

The excavation uncovered a horseshoe-shaped settlement with log and timber post constructions. Organic materials such as wood and animal bones were preserved in the lowest parts of some wells. Other finds from the site included pottery shards, spindle whorls, two Slavic temple rings made of copper, iron objects like a knife blade, and animal bones. The majority of the pottery is German, although there was also late Slavic pottery. The temple rings also indicate a Slavic presence, as they

were a clear part of Slavic dress culture. Although the excavation yielded considerable results, it was not possible to establish if the settlement had been clearly setup by the new settlers, or if it was a Slavic village. It is likely that both groups lived there together, although the relationship between the two groups remains elusive.

During the excavation, the idea was born to recreate some of the houses, as well as the medieval craft techniques and some of the surrounding landscape, to enable visitors to experience the results of an archaeological





excavation in a more informative and enjoyable manner. The houses were reconstructed on the original sites of the medieval floor plans. Gardens, fields, meadows, and differing types of forests were created to demonstrate a model cultural landscape. Oxen, pigs, and sheep completed the picture of a medieval subsistence village. The open-air museum was set up through the volunteers of the association *Förderkreis Museumsdorf Düppel*, initiated in 1975. The volunteers organised themselves in working groups, specialising in different topics and craft activities. Since 1995, the Museum Village Düppel has belonged to City Museum Berlin, which is responsible for the running of the museum today.

Using archaeological excavation results to rebuild medieval houses is not a straightforward reconstruction of the past. The remains of stone architecture might be easier, but wooden buildings do not leave a lot for archaeologists to find once they start to decay. Most of the time it is just a few round pits with darker-coloured soil – the remains of decomposed wooden posts. Considering our knowledge of building structures during that time, as well

as the materials available during the period, there are still a lot of ways to build a house from just a few of the posts. It is therefore not possible to reconstruct an archaeologically excavated building; it is only possible to construct one possible interpretation.

The choice of roof material is a good example. There is rarely any clear evidence what materials were used for the roof constructions. Instead, the evidence, materials and tools available during the time period in question have to be evaluated and a “best-fit solution” formulated. Until summer 2019, all house models in the Museum Village Düppel were built with thatched roofs. Other possibilities for a rather poor farming settlement around 1200 AD might have been rye straw, bark and wooden shingles. However, in order to thatch that number of houses with rye straw, about ten to twelve hectares of cultivated land would be needed. Such a large amount would have been difficult to cultivate straight away after arriving at the site. Bark might have a quick solution, as a lot of it would have been around from felling the trees and building the houses. Whether the bark available was from the right trees and had the correct shape for covering roofs needs to be investigated more thoroughly before trying it out on a real roof.

Wooden shingles are a real possibility, especially as the results from pollen analyses have shown that the forest

in the area was very dense and untouched when the village Düppel was built. There are some isolated wooden shingle finds from medieval contexts, though the strongest indication for shingle roofs comes from 17th century edicts on fire hazards in Berlin. These edicts mention that it was not allowed any longer to cover roofs with wooden shingles due to fire hazard. One of the disadvantages of wooden shingles is that they don't insulate houses as well as thatched roofs. It is therefore likely that wooden shingles were mainly used for two-storied buildings, workshops and storage spaces.



The uniformity of the thatched roofs in Düppel can lead to the false assumption that the all houses really did look like that in the Middle Ages. It is also likely that different materials were used on different houses standing side by side, depending on the availability of materials. This means uniform roofs could lead to false images in visitors' perceptions.

In order to encourage visitors to question why the houses are built in certain ways, we decided to cover one of the houses with wooden shingles instead of thatch. Shortly after deciding on this course of action, a proposal for a European Heritage Volunteers Project with Museums Village Düppel was made. The new shingle roof was seen as an ideal project for such cooperation. To make the work more varied, a cob floor was also renewed in one of the houses. The technical instruction was covered by employees of the museum. Due to time and financial constraints, split oak shingles were bought and delivered to the site. All other steps happened on site, including making the wooden nails for fixing the shingles and drilling holes into the shingles. After preparing the substructure of the roof, overlapping shingles were placed onto the beams and fixed with wooden nails.

The project participants worked in all stages of the process and many visitors enjoyed watching the progress on the roof. The idea of encouraging visitors to ask questions by showing alternative roof coverings worked, as many people wanted to know why this roof was covered with shingles, drawing the masters and the participants into discussions about the reconstructed buildings. It was a great project, where each side learned a lot.

■ Julia Heeb
Curator Museum Village Düppel



CONSERVATION & RESTORATION

Conservation-restoration is a field of cultural heritage which one would not automatically associate with voluntary engagement. The topic is too specific, the objects are too fragile, the tasks are too specialised to think about involving volunteers in this field. It is not a coincidence that in most countries a comprehensive education is necessary to work as conservator-restorer.

In fact, conservation-restoration is probably the most sensitive area of cultural heritage to involve volunteers. Nevertheless, this is not totally out of the question to involve volunteers in conservation-restoration when the work is carefully planned, implemented and supervised.

Conservation-restoration is not only intervention of the object itself, it includes other tasks, too. Before the restoration process can start, appropriate documentation is necessary. In case of a large number of similar elements – such as ceramic shards, tiles and so on – or separate pieces which had originally belonged to one bigger object, cataloguing is a necessary part of the preparation of the conservation-restoration process. Both are tasks which are appropriate for volunteers who have a general heritage-related background, but are not necessarily trained conservators-restorers, after a detailed introduction to the objects, their challenges and the implemented documentation structure.

In addition, cleaning is a necessary and very time-consuming step before actual conservation-restoration. It requires dedication and attentiveness, as well as an appropriate introduction and permanent monitoring by a professional conservator-restorer, but it does not necessarily have to be carried out by conservators-restorers themselves. This is the reason why these works are in restoration companies often carried out by trainees, interns or other persons who have not completed training in conservation-restoration – similarly, so can volunteers be involved in these tasks. The experience shows that volunteers work understandably slower than skilled conservators-restorers, but that the quality is not at all lower, since one can exercise better concentration and dedication for such a monotonous task as cleaning for a period of two weeks than for a longer period, which might lead to a certain routine.

Finally, voluntary engagement for conservation-restoration demonstrates that voluntary engagement and professional approach, education, and results are not mutually exclusive, since also professionals can be voluntarily engaged. Maybe this can be best illustrated with a sentence of one volunteer from the European Heritage Volunteers network: “I am a trained conservator-restorer and earn my living in this field and when I am voluntarily engaging in my profession, I do not become less trained, less professional.”



European Heritage Volunteers organises projects in the field of conservation-restoration for two reasons: on one hand, there is often a large amount of restoration works to be carried out which cannot be managed due to the limited number of employed restorers-conservators or the limited funds available, therefore leaving many objects to remain in depots. Thus, the volunteering projects contribute to the restoration and visibility of otherwise hidden objects. On the other hand, European Heritage Volunteers Projects and European Heritage Training Courses provide practical hands-on experience for young heritage professionals and provide young art historians, museologists, architects, and others who will work in the future indirectly with conservation-restoration an insight view into this special field, and thus help to develop the necessary sensitivity for an adequate professional heritage-dedicated approach.



CONSERVATION AND RESTORATION OF WOODEN TABERNACLES

Univ Monastery · Ukraine

Tabernacles – a neglected element of a church's interior

Univ Holy Dormition Lavra of the Studite Rite is a large monastic complex in the Lviv region which was established around 1400. It is one of three *lavras* in Ukraine and the only *lavra* of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church. *Lavra* is a type of monastery that serves as the centre of religious spirit in the region, due to its size, influence, historical name and the important religious activities undertaken there. It was erected within the Orthodox and other Eastern Christian traditions.

Univ Lavra houses about twenty-five Studite Brethren. This sprawling religious compound has everything – a wooden church, a massive monastic complex, fortress-like walls, an old bell-tower, and a church that dates back to 1548. The old church has ancient frescoes as well as several religious jewels and paintings.

During the rule of the Austrian Empire, the monastery was closed. Monastic life in the church was revived thanks to Andrew Sheptytsky, who conferred the status of the monastery church. Under Soviet rule, the monastery was closed again. Now, everything has returned to its rightful place: the complex is open once again to believers.

During Univ Monastery's history, a library, shelter and icon-painting workshop were formed. After the Soviet

period, the Museum of Sacred Art was established, which now operates in the Univ Lavra. The museum has a large collection of religious items, including a collection of tabernacles.

A tabernacle is the centrepiece of every church. A tabernacle is necessary on the altar; it symbolises the place of the crucifix, the laying of the tomb, the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the ark of the covenant. The Holy Gifts for the liturgy are kept in the tabernacle. The Holy Eucharist is the most holy of all the sacraments because bread and wine symbolise the Saviour. Therefore, the bread and wine of the sacrament of the Holy Eucharist, as a symbol and concrete embodiment of the body and blood of the Lord, have to be stored in a precious place. The tabernacles were treated as a sacred repetition of the image of the church that was founded by the Saviour. They are supposed to resemble the Church of Christ, Jerusalem and the Holy Land.

The Holy Eucharist is the greatest mystery in both the Eastern and Western Churches. The only difference is the approach and interpretation. The Western Church speaks of the Eucharistic Christ, who left the majesty of heaven and lives in the icon case, to be as close to people as possible. Therefore, the altar and the tabernacle became the subject of special attention and veneration



not only during the liturgy but also outside of it. The Holy Eucharist in the Eastern Church is the most important source of sanctification and conversion. This mystery holds a significant place in religious cult. But the pinnacle of this cult and of the entire hierarchy of values is the Heavenly Christ, the





second person of God, who “sits on the right hand of the Father”. To summarise – the centre of the Western liturgy is the Eucharistic Christ, who dwells on earth and becomes spiritual nourishment for the people. The centre of the Eastern liturgy is the heavenly glorified Saviour who nourishes us with his Holy Body and Holy Blood.

Iconographic types of tabernacles correspond to the interpretation of the Gospel story or reproduce the appearance of the Holy Sepulchre at different stages of its development. To reflect the Rotunda of the Resurrection Cathedral in Jerusalem, authors introduced a temple motif to the tabernacles to represent the worship of sacred heirlooms. The tabernacle in the middle of the altar should be erected as a small shrine or tomb. It should not be too high or wide so as to restrain liturgical actions of the servant and the coservant or make the liturgy impossible. That is why, when we see the tabernacle, its dimensions, style of execution and decoration, we can better imagine what the church was like.

The collection of the Univ Museum of Sacred Art includes tabernacles from the 17th to 19th centuries from Western Ukraine. They were brought there for several reasons: either the church bought a new tabernacle, they were found in attics or abandoned churches, or the church does not exist anymore.





Heritage Training Courses. Within the Training Courses the restoration process of the aforementioned tabernacles will be continued, as well as emergency measures at other tabernacles begun.

■ *Alina Mulyk*
Project Coordinator



The European Heritage Volunteers Project focused on the emergency conservation of several wooden tabernacles and included various steps of the conservation and restoration process.

Firstly, all the objects were measured, photographically and verbally documented and their condition described. Based on the documentation, the conservation process itself was carried out. The conservation started by the cleaning, disinfection and removal of surface contamination. It was followed by the strengthening of wood and stabilisation of the preparatory layer and completed by the stabilisation and the

laying of the paint layer. For the tabernacles which included metal pieces, the process included the preservation of these parts as well.

As a result of the European Heritage Volunteers Project, the destruction of eight wooden tabernacles of different shapes, sizes, and time periods from various churches in Western Ukraine could be stopped. The tabernacles can be visited now in the exhibition of the Museum of Sacred Art of Univ Holy Dormition Lavra.

The project will be repeated in the coming years in the form of European



**INVENTORY AND PREVENTIVE CONSERVATION
OF AZULEJOS**

Lisbon · Portugal

Restoring azulejos – a unique, but endangered heritage

The word *azulejo* is deeply rooted in Lisbon's vocabulary and a vital part of the city's cultural heritage. The word derives from the Arabic word *az-zulayj* (meaning "polished stone") and describes a decorative and utilitarian ceramic tile. Although it is not a Portuguese invention, the country is responsible for its imaginative development as a functional and creative architectural element.



Introduced to Portugal during the 15th century, *azulejo* patterns and figures became a testimony to the country's history over the course of the centuries. While the *azulejos* at historical buildings are decorated with religious motifs, their contemporary use is more versatile. Nowadays, they are everywhere in the city, decorating walls of churches and monasteries, palaces, façades of

residential buildings, fountains and gardens, markets and traditional shops, railway stations, and other public and social buildings.

The *azulejos'* integration on the façades of buildings is due to their technical function and is essential to the protection of the building itself. Additionally, the decorative purpose of tiles was to bring brightness to the streets of Lisbon through their brilliantly colored geometric designs. Old quarters of the city provide the same visual landscape as they did centuries ago, even when the buildings themselves have aged and the *azulejos* have become somewhat worn with time.

Nowadays, *azulejos* – in Lisbon as well as all over Portugal – are at risk due to numerous reasons such as poor state of conservation of the buildings, negligence, and theft. It is urgent to prevent the disappearance of this fragile but indispensable heritage.

The goal of the European Heritage Volunteers Project, carried out in collaboration and under the theoretical and practical supervision of the *Divisão de Salvaguarda de Património Cultural de Câmara Municipal de Lisboa*, was to raise awareness to the importance of Lisbon's *azulejos* as a cultural highlight of the city, and to draw attention to the necessity of their protection.



The main objective of the *Divisão de Salvaguarda de Património Cultural* is to inventory, safeguard, conserve, and restore sculptures in the public space and *azulejos*, primarily the unique patterns and typologies which are no longer available and produced. In addition to the restoration workshop, a stockroom had been created to catalogue a wide variety of *azulejos'* typologies, an important tool of the work of the institution.



Within the framework of the European Heritage Volunteers Project, international participants could get an overview of the cataloguing process as well as the restoration process of *azulejos*. Not intended to train professionals in conservation and restoration, the project aimed primarily at creating heritage-related, historical and artistic awareness, and the particular needs of *azulejos*' conservation as a work of art. Not limited to the conservation and restoration of tiles, a broader approach was taken that encompassed the entire process, from the factors involved in *azulejos*' degradation, to removal for treatment, storage, conservation, restoration, and the process of handicraft-based production of *azulejos* in factories.



The project started with a theoretical introduction focusing on the main endogenous and exogenous factors involved in the process of *azulejos*' degradation, such as climatic factors, pollution, human action and degradation related to manufacturing materials. Ethical and deontological issues that should guide all conservation-restoration interventions were addressed, especially those related to the minimal intervention, reversibility and compatibility of materials to be applied.

One of the practical parts the project took place in the laboratory of the *Divisão de Salvaguarda de Património Cultural*. The laboratory is an indispensable tool in specific conservation and restoration

interventions for *azulejos* and statuary, whether in stone or bronze supports and alloys. Participants were supporting the restoration of *azulejos* from the canteen of the Municipality of Marvila, a district of Lisbon. Originally dating from the 1930s, the Marvila municipal canteen recently underwent rehabilitation work that caused the need of conservation and restoration of the main *azulejo* panel, produced by the Italian artist Leonel Battistini.

According to the available bibliography, Battistini was born in 1865 in Italy and was hired at the age of twenty-three by the Portuguese government to teach in Portugal. After the visit of the Portuguese King Carlos I to his studio,

Battistini moved to the Marquês de Pombal School in 1903. Since King Carlos was also a painter, artist and lover of the arts, he admired Battistini. Having worked as a teacher and artist for twenty-seven years, Battistini was the main catalyst for the revitalisation of Portuguese artistic ceramics in the first half of the 20th century.

The Marvila canteen panel presented a wide range of conservation issues to be addressed. After the panel had been disassembled and transported to the workshop, the participants expanded a photographic register and graphic documentation of the different types of pathologies of *azulejos* and the changes in the state of conservation.

Damages were carefully noted in order to best plan the restoration approach. Afterwards, the residual mortar was removed from the back of the *azulejos* and they were cleaned of dirt and grime. Fractures and cracks were repaired with the application of polyvinyl acetate. This was followed by true-to-scale reconstructions of the imperfections with a special, reversible, water-based mortar. Finally, chromatic reintegration, in order to give a correct reading to the tile panel, was performed with acrylic-based pigments in aqueous medium.

The second practical part of the project, which focused on the storage and packing of the *azulejos*, took place at the *Banco do Azulejo*. The *Banco do Azulejo* facilities are specifically designed for the collection, cataloguing and storage of *azulejos*, comprising of several thousand tiles of different themes, production methods and historical periods. The space is equipped with specific areas for conservation and restoration of *azulejos*, provided with



tools and materials for this purpose, as well as large space with specific shelves for storage of *azulejos*.

At the depot, the participants learned about the inventory process and catalogued *azulejos* according to several criteria such as size, historical period, artist, factory, technique of elaboration, and decorative motifs. Finally, the function and context of the *azulejos* were analysed.

After selecting the *azulejos* and wrapping them according to their typology, a final cleaning was carried out before storing them in containers made specifically for historical tiles.

Finally, the participants were able to visit a workshop where *azulejos* are produced manually and participate in the manufacturing process, as well as learn about the different production and painting techniques. The participants could be in direct contact with the production method, making an *azulejo* in practice, performing various techniques, final design and painting, as well as the consequent application of glaze.

Given the excellent results demonstrated by this experience, it can be concluded that the involved organisations and institutions, as well as the participants, are more enriched in terms of personal, professional and heritage experience.

The European Heritage Volunteers Project was an efficient and successful way of generating awareness about the need to preserve cultural heritage in general and *azulejos* in particular. The direct contact with the conservation, restoration, and *azulejos* production methods undoubtedly created a close personal connection between the participants and the artistic object, fostering a sensitivity to heritage they otherwise might never have achieved.

■ *Leonel Ribeiro & Frederico Vaz*
Senior Technicians
Cultural Heritage Safeguard Division
of Lisbon's Municipality



DOCUMENTATION & RESEARCH

Documentation and research of cultural heritage is an optimal field for voluntary engagement.

There is a wide range of appropriate topics, various approaches to be used and different methodologies to be applied, as well as aims which can be achieved through documentation carried out by volunteers. In some cases, documentation is – sadly – the last thing that can be done for a heritage site or ensemble, for specific heritage elements, or a historic or cultural phenomenon before significant information is partly lost or totally disappeared. In other cases, documentation is – conversely – the first step for the rescue of endangered heritage, since it can raise awareness and provide the necessary base for later preservation measures both concerning the interventions themselves, as well as for the acquisition of funds. Finally, even at well-known heritage sites, the documentation of not yet documented components or the use of new methods may help to discover new aspects and open new or more complex views on the site.

The documentation itself provides a good base for the next steps – systematisation and research. Research may also include the use of additional sources such as archives, libraries, photo collections and others. Since these tasks are quite personnel-intensive, the involvement of volunteers here can be a real support.

A special area highly appropriate for the involvement of volunteers is research which involves the local population – be it through questionnaires, personalised interviews, or other tools. Here, well prepared volunteers are not only able to gain a remarkable quantity and high quality of data, information and opinion, but as volunteers they are in a position which may make some inhabitants more willing to share personal views, historical photographs and artefacts, which they might not have done with the local administration or a commercially working agency.

In general, documentation and research might be those areas of volunteering for cultural heritage which overlap the most with other areas, and where aspects of tangible and intangible heritage are touch and merge the strongest with each other.

However, the involvement of volunteers, particularly of international groups, as it is the case within the European Heritage Volunteers Programme, in documentation and research has also its limits. This counts first and foremost when working with sources which are linked to a particular language – inscriptions on buildings or gravestones, libraries, archives and other collections – which demands a special group composition of volunteers, usually combining one person from the particular country or region with one person from the outside.



The same limitation is visible when interviewing the local community or collecting data in a particular urban or rural environment; but on the other hand, just the presence of young volunteers from abroad often stirs a certain curiosity within the local community and makes their representatives more open to sharing their opinions. In addition, the position of an outsider brings into the process other views and thus enables other approaches and questions.

This effect is also an advantage for projects dedicated to interpretation and planning, be it aimed at a single building, a heritage ensemble or a wider rural or urban context. Participants coming from abroad can contribute to the process with their outside view in a refreshing and inspiring way, widening the perspective of the local activists and contributing with experiences and good practice models from their countries.

European Heritage Volunteers sees in both fields – documentation and research – a great potential of transnational transferability of approaches, methodologies and results and will therefore in the future further develop and extend this type of projects.



**DOCUMENTATION AND RESEARCH
OF GRAVESTONES ON JEWISH CEMETERIES**

Halberstadt · Germany

Secrets which are hidden for the human eye

Halberstadt has three Jewish cemeteries. The oldest was laid out in the first half of the 17th century and was used until the end of the 18th century. The second was built in succession in the immediate vicinity and in 1897, the Jewish Congregation acquired a plot of land for a third cemetery, which adjoins the municipal cemetery that was laid out at the time. During the National Socialist era, the cemeteries were “aryanised” as Jewish property. During the era of the German Democratic Republic, they were administered by the Magdeburg Jewish community and following the reunification of Germany transferred to the newly founded Saxony-Anhalt State Association of Jewish Communities. This association owns all Jewish cemeteries in Saxony-Anhalt and maintains them with funds for the conservation of historical monuments.

According to Jewish tradition, the cemetery is the “good place”; graves exist until the resurrection when the Messiah comes. The purchase of a Jewish grave can never be cancelled. Jewish cemeteries are also an essential source for research in regional Jewish history. Their very existence indicates a place where Jews were tolerated, as one method of preventing the settlement of Jews was to prohibit their own cemeteries. Since the 19th century, cemeteries have been telling the inside story of a Jewish community through their layouts. They indicate

whether they have remained faithful to their traditions or have adopted non-Jewish ones, such burial in family vaults, flowerbeds and German gravestone inscriptions. For instance, in Halberstadt it can be deduced from the retention of the single-grave burial and the Hebrew gravestone inscriptions up until the 20th century that the community had a neo-Orthodox orientation.

In Halberstadt, Jews have been documented since the 13th century. Why a cemetery was only established four hundred years later cannot be explained. The relationship between the bishops who governed the diocese of Halberstadt and the Jews was a solid business relationship, which ensured the continued existence and development of the Jewish community. There is no evidence whatsoever that the bishops, as was often the case, denied the Jews of Halberstadt a cemetery in order to oust them from their diocese. It is known that Jews from Halberstadt were buried in Derenburg, about ten kilometres away, until the cemetery at the *Roter Strumpf* was established.

The name of the oldest cemetery, *Am Roten Strumpf*, refers to the former place of execution because the executioner, in order not to be recognised, hid his face with a red stocking. The cemetery has not been used since the 19th century.



The more than 250 preserved gravestones are splendid Baroque stones with Hebrew inscriptions and typical symbols like the crown, which stands for faithfulness to the Jewish religious law of the deceased, hands symbolising the rabbi’s blessing and the Levite’s jug. Due to limited space, people were buried very close to one another. The stones preserved at the original burial site make this clear and give an impression, albeit a weak one, of the original overall picture.

There were about 2,000 graves in the cemetery, today 268 gravestones are preserved. The number 2,000 is based on a record from the 1940s for the *Reichssippenamt*, the National Office of Genealogy, who understood the gravestone inscriptions as a source for the potential proof of Jewish origin. Though the city archive has invoices for a professional photo documentation of the stones, the film material itself has yet to be located. In connection with this documentation, and in the context of the “Law on safeguarding valuable Jewish cultural assets”, the gravestones of the Court Jew Berend Lehmann (died 1730) and of Rabbi Zwi Hirsch Bialeh, called “Charif the shrewd”, (died 1750) were removed from the cemetery in 1941 and kept separately. Later, most of

the gravestones were removed from the cemetery and used to stabilise protective trenches during the bombardment of Halberstadt in the Second World War. Following liberation in 1945, the gravestones were under the supervision of the US Army brought back to the cemetery, though probably not all of them. Historical photographs show the gravestones leaning against the northern cemetery wall. In the 1960s, gravestones – not only Jewish ones – were allowed to be used in construction due to a lack of building materials. Jewish cemeteries were completely emptied in many places, but in Halberstadt committed citizens stopped the removal of the stones. The stones were then laid out and covered with earth.

Today, the inscriptions of most of the stones are very weathered, so that they are hardly or not at all legible. There is extensive source material available that makes it possible to assign gravestones to persons, and there are historical photos. These were often taken by families in connection with their flight from the National Socialists. Today, reproductions of such photos are available for research purposes through the Moses Mendelssohn Academy's contacts with the emigrated families. The photos provide information on inscriptions' content and make the rapid decay of the gravestones clear. They also show the original placement of the stones. Photos from the 1980s and 1990s in particular illustrate the rapid decay of the

stones in recent decades, and show the urgency of continuous maintenance, including conservation-oriented documentation of their condition.

The cemetery *Am Berge* which was established at the end of the 18th and beginning of the 19th century still preserves all of the 430 graves with their gravestones. Like the oldest cemetery, the cemetery consists of single graves. The designs of the gravestones contain the typical symbols already mentioned, reflecting the aesthetics of the 19th century.

There is one major difference between the gravestones of the two cemeteries: while the inscriptions on the gravestones at the cemetery *Am Roten Strumpf* are in Hebrew, at the cemetery *Am Berge*, the front-side inscriptions are in Hebrew, but the name and the dates of life of the deceased are written in German on the back, with the dates of life following the Jewish calendar.

The gravestones of the cemetery *Am Berge* were documented in the 1960s thanks to the initiative of the Halberstadt town historian Werner Hartmann with support of students of the University of Leipzig. The index cards created at that time record the individual grave site with a photograph and an attempted translation of the Hebrew inscription. This documentation, especially with regard to the erosion of the gravestones, forms an essential basis for the future research work.

The Saxony-Anhalt State Association of Jewish Communities can use funds available for the conservation of historical monuments to preserve the cemeteries, i.e. to secure the enclosure walls and to maintain the greenery. However, it is already impossible to finance more specific work, such as the removal of ivy vegetation or the cutting of greenery growing between the narrow rows of gravestones. No funds are available for the conservation or restoration of individual gravestones, or for the documentation and scientific research of the cemeteries. The descendants of the deceased must pay for the restoration of gravestones; documentation and research must be carried out with other funding.



The European Heritage Volunteers Projects, at the cemetery *Am Roten Strumpf* in 2018 and at the cemetery *Am Berge* in 2019, could fulfil the desiderata for the creation of a basis for more profound research work.

In 2018, bushes between the narrow rows of graves were removed from the oldest cemetery, and the gravestones were cleared of ivy, moss and lichen. This led to the discovery of thirty-three gravestones that were previously unknown. One of them is the gravestone of Berend Lehmann's mother Zippora, whose grave was been suspected to be in Essen.

In 2019, the same maintenance works were carried out at the *Am Berge* cemetery as in the first cemetery the year before. These works ensure the long-term material preservation of the gravestones. But above all, against the background of the National Socialist history of Germany, they mean taking on historical responsibility and respect for the Jewish families, who were completely destroyed or had to emigrate, and cannot look after the graves of their ancestors.

As a second – and main – step for both cemeteries during the projects, a documentation of all gravestones was made – 93 % of the gravestones at the cemetery *Am Roten Strumpf* in 2018, and in 2019 the remaining 7% as well as all gravestones at the cemetery *Am*

Berge. The documentation records the current material status of each individual gravestone as a whole with photos, describes its condition according to heritage conservation criteria, and it is linked with geographical data in a site map. This documentation is indispensable for further scientific work, since it enables the observation and evaluation of further changes, in particular when compared with the aforementioned analogous documentation produced by Werner Hartmann in the 1960s. In addition, the gravestone inscriptions can be indexed on this basis. Since the documentation is available in digital form, the data can be accessed by Jewish families all over the world, as well as by scientists and interested laymen.

The documentation was selectively accompanied by a project of the Bet Tfila Research Centre for Jewish Architecture at Braunschweig Technical University. Using a deep-layer laser device, discoloration is eliminated so that inscriptions which were no longer visible to the human eye could be seen again.

Parallel to the work in the cemeteries, the project participants learned about the Jewish history of Halberstadt. In addition, they had the opportunity to meet the participants of the “Sephardic Summer School”, which is held annually in collaboration with the Institute for the History of German Jews in Hamburg, and to partake in its educational activities.



The project will be continued in the coming years and will focus on the third cemetery at *Klein Quenstedter Straße* in 2020. The Bet Tfila Research Centre will also remain involved, and the use of the special laser-scan technology will be particularly important at this cemetery, because many stones were made of artificial stone and are therefore more delicate and at a higher risk of loss. We hope the scanning technology will improve the legibility of the inscriptions, further contributing to our overall knowledge of the Jewish Halberstadt community.

Eventually, the combination developed in Halberstadt of vegetation clearance, photographic and written gravestone documentation in accordance with international standards, and the application of scanning technology shall be applied at other Jewish cemeteries in Germany as well as in other European countries.

■ **Jutta Dick**
Director
of Moses Mendelssohn Academy



MAPPING AND DOCUMENTATION OF INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE

Ivanić-Grad · Croatia

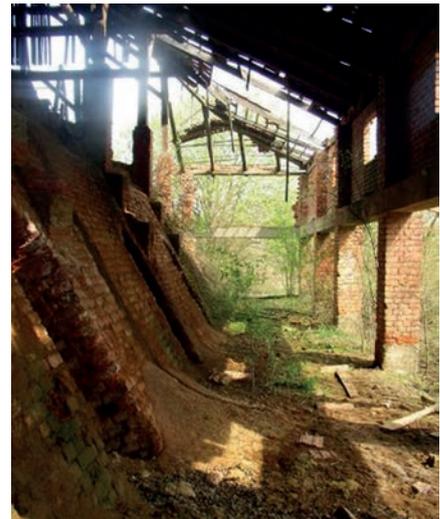
What remains when industry breaks down?

Ivanić-Grad is located forty kilometers east of Zagreb and has around 14,000 inhabitants. It is part of Zagreb county and geographically belongs to Western Moslavina. The railway line built in 1899 boosted modernisation of wider area around Ivanić-Grad, therefore, the industrial heritage of the city can be traced throughout the 20th century. In the first half of the 20th century, industry consisted mostly of mills, sawdust, alcoholic beverage and brick factories. Thanks to the electric power plant, Ivanić-Grad already had electric power in 1913. Rich deposits of oil and natural gas, discovered after Second World War in the rural hinterland of the historic settlements of Križ, Kloštar

Ivanić, and Ivanić-Grad, were one of the main reasons for significant changes in the economic and social structure of the population.



In addition to the oil industry, Ivanić-Grad has other industries which started to develop such as: Ivasim (chemical industry), Ivasim elektronika (computer manufacturing), Antilop (production of protective clothing), TMPK (metal products and constructions factory), Iva-karton (paper production, cartons of paper and cardboard packaging), Ivanić-plast (production of plastic items), DIP (wood processing industry) and Croatia (battery factory). Agriculture played a vital role for the city's economy until the end of the Second World War, after which oil, gas, chemical industries, and metal processing took over a more prominent economic role.





The European Heritage Volunteers Project „Mapping and documentation of industrial heritage in Ivanić-Grad“ was carried out as an international and interdisciplinary workshop and consisted of material research in archives, identification of relevant industrial heritage monuments, photographic documentation production, and creation of a website prototype as a final product.

The aim was to make industrial heritage more visible and accessible by providing coherent, research-based information about these monuments, as well as to contribute to its valorisation through the photo documentation and website. In addition, in order to involve the local population and make use

of their knowledge, interviews with people who worked in these companies were conducted to get a more comprehensive overview of how the industry has influenced everyday life in Ivanić-Grad and to use the process of storytelling to raise awareness.

Given that the industrial heritage in Ivanić-Grad was not documented, the main objective of the project was to provide a systematic overview of industry development and to contribute to the awareness of the local community about the importance of preserving industrial heritage. The results of the workshop will be the basis for the future work towards its sustainable management.

The project was organised and conducted by the Friends of Heritage Association Ivanić-Grad and the Culture Hub Croatia, in collaboration with European Heritage Volunteers.

Around ten members of the Friends of Heritage Association were actively involved in the daily workshop activities. The participants came from Argentina, Czech Republic, Portugal, Russia, Serbia, Spain, Thailand, and Croatia.

The project was successful since it engaged most important stakeholders – the local community, public authorities, the civil society and the private sector. Diversified sponsorships and donations from companies, the support of the city administration and the tourist board of Ivanić-Grad, as well as from local and regional associations played a crucial role in implementation and realisation of the programme.

The partnership with European Heritage Volunteers gave the whole project a European dimension which is very important for the initial process of raising awareness among citizens that our industrial heritage should be perceived in a wider geographical context.

The project activities were documented and regularly published on social media channels and caused a significant ripple effect throughout the local community.

During the project we conducted an online survey to get feedback from the local citizens. Preliminary results of the survey with 70 participants showed that 100 % of the interviewed persons would like to see the industrial heritage of Ivanić-Grad enlisted on the European Route of Industrial Heritage, 75 % of the persons expressed that they would like to see their personal items enlisted on the Virtual Museum of Industrial Heritage Ivanić-Grad, 55 % would financially support the project and 85 % believe that Friends of Heritage Association is doing good work in promoting the project.

In order to widen the perspective of the participants, to network, and to share knowledge and good practices, Friends of Heritage Association organised a half-day excursion to the city of Sisak in order to explore the city's industrial heritage. Sisak is the first city in Croatia that opened an industrial heritage interpretation center.

Important elements of the project were two public events. The first event was focused on cases studies of industrial heritage revitalisation in Barcelona, Belgrade, Buenos Aires, Kaliningrad, Madrid, Porto, as well as from the Arab Peninsula and Czech Republic provided by the international participants.

The final event presented the results of the project with suggestions on how to

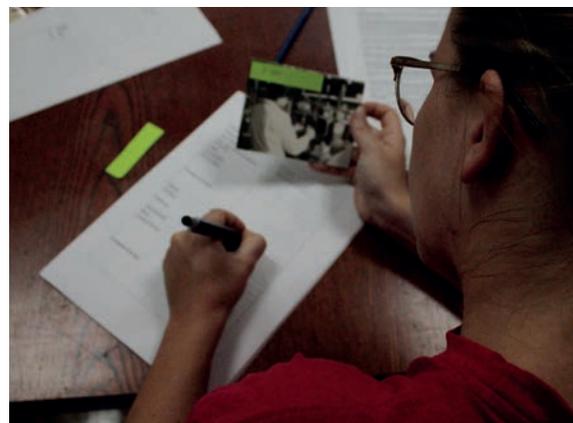
move forward with the project, how to raise awareness among the local population, and how to revitalise particular industrial heritage sites in the city.

As a result of the European Heritage Volunteers Project, the Friends of Heritage were invited to present the project on occasion of the “Days of Industrial Heritage” in Sisak. Consequently, we invited representatives of industrial heritage projects from Sisak, Karlovac, and Rijeka in Croatia and Trbovlje in Slovenia to present their initiatives to our local community and to demonstrate that industrial heritage has a great potential for further cultural and touristic valorisation and interpretation.

Members of the Friends of Heritage Association engaged in analysis of the documentation produced within the framework of the European Heritage Volunteers Project and included them in the Virtual Museum of Industrial Heritage Ivanić-Grad.

In the coming years, our association will continue the documentation of industrial heritage in our city and its surrounding area and focus on promotion of the project in Croatia and its neighboring countries.

■ *Ana Gašparović*
President
of the Friends of Heritage Association





**ARCHIVING OF DOCUMENTS AND ITEMS
LINKED TO THE OEUVRE OF ANTONI GAUDÍ**

Casa Batlló · Barcelona · Spain

Beyond the doors of Casa Batlló

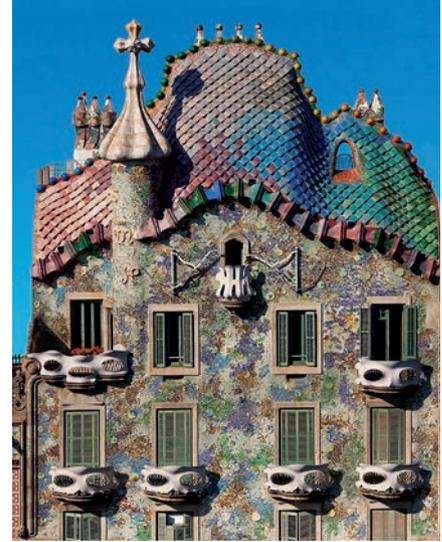
Casa Batlló, a modernist-style building in Barcelona, is the result of the renovation of an austere building designed in 1877 by Emilio Sala Cortés, who was Antoni Gaudí's teacher during his architecture studies. Although the initial idea was to knock down the house, thanks to the courage shown by Gaudí, it was ultimately decided to carry out a full renovation, transforming a classic-style building into a masterpiece of modernism – full of imagination, creativity and innovation – between 1904 and 1906.

Natural light illuminates every corner of Casa Batlló, largely thanks to the main skylight and two central patios, decorated in blue tones, where light is distributed. The upper tiles on the patios are darker than the lower ones and the windows increase in size the lower they descend. Thanks to these two innovative ideas – the colour graduations and the size of the windows – Gaudí successfully distributed light equally through the different floors.

Gaudí designed an original ventilation system, including different openings on the house's windows. These openings are manual and make it possible to regulate the air with precision, without having to open the windows fully. Thus the design of the central patios, where the majority of air enters, helps to maintain heat in winter and ventilate in

summer. Gaudí, the engineer, achieved maximum comfort following energy efficiency criteria, an outstanding contribution to sustainability in architecture and design.

Trencadís, a type decoration with of broken mosaic, is a fundamental element in Gaudí's work, especially on the façade of Casa Batlló. Created through pieces of broken glass and tile, it was one of the architect's preferred techniques due to its sustainability and aesthetic value. At the house, it is one of the main decorative elements resulting in the light and colour emanating from the façade. Gaudí, a visionary, sought beauty in balance with nature and functionality.



Due to its outstanding universal value, Casa Batlló was inscribed in the World Heritage List in 2005 as a component of the Works of Antoni Gaudí. Currently it is a private house managed by its owners who opened the house for public visitors in 2002. In 2018, Casa Batlló received 1.2 million visitors.





The European Heritage Volunteers Project with the title “Beyond the doors of Casa Batlló” combined elements of research and documentation and restoration elements. In addition to these main tasks, the participants joined several educational activities in the workshops of artisans that contributed to the restoration of Casa Batlló. This combined program aimed to raise awareness of the importance of archives for the restoration process and their contribution to heritage storytelling, as well as of the importance of contemporary craftsmen and artisans for the conservation and restoration of heritage sites.

In order to support the documentation of Casa Batlló, participants archived and organised historical documents, incorporating them into a digital database. Despite their good state of conservation, many of the documents are not yet incorporated into an electronic

database for public consultation and research analysis. This task is a big priority due to the risk of loss in case of fire, moisture or other natural phenomena. In addition, the digitisation of the documents enables easier access for current and future restoration and research projects at Casa Batlló.

The participants were working in the archives of *Institut Amatller d'Art Hispànic*, the archive of the Gaudí Chair of the Polytechnic University of Catalonia and in the archive of Casa Batlló itself. At the latter, the works focused on the guest books, which – though they are not yet historical documents – include relevant information about the impressions of the visitors concerning the current use of the heritage site.

The educational part provided the necessary background knowledge, as well as an inside look at the challenges and

potentials of modern heritage and the management of highly frequented World Heritage sites. First, the programme included a visit to a glass workshop that had restored several elements at Casa Batlló, such as the original lamps of the Noble Floor. Second, the participants visited the ceramic workshop whose artisans collaborated with Casa Batlló in the reintegration of original elements with new ones following traditional techniques. The third visit led the participants to a joinery workshop where they witnessed the restoration process of relevant wooden elements using a combination of traditional and modern procedures.

In addition, special activities were conducted to enhance the vision and the understanding of heritage conservation and heritage management. This included a workshop on sustainability applied to cultural heritage management and conservation, conducted by the UNESCO Chair on Sustainability of the *Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya*, and a walking tour to modernist





buildings in Barcelona with Casa Batlló as the starting point, conducted by a member of the GRACMON Research Group of the University of Barcelona. Last but not least, a *trencadís* workshop was organised in which the participants learned the technique of *trencadís* guided by an artisan who specialises in coaching through *trencadís*, a collaborator of Casa Batlló.

In conclusion, the experience of the project has contributed to the documentation of Casa Batlló, a task that has to be continued in the future and will be an essential part of the heritage responsibility of the current managers of the site. At the same time, with the educational programme, Casa Batlló has contributed to the training and capacity development of young heritage profes-

sionals who have participated in the project. We all – participants and site managers – have highly appreciated the mutual contribution that has been a milestone for the safeguarding of the outstanding universal values of the World Heritage site Casa Batlló.

■ *Amilcar Vargas*
Head of World Heritage at Casa Batlló



KALEIDOSCOPE OF HERITAGE TRAINING COURSES

Cultural heritage is not only the tangible heritage which surrounds us, but it also includes the intangible aspects of traditional handicraft. In fact, this intangible aspect is the base for the tangible one, because the tangible heritage is often the result of traditional techniques.

On the other hand, heritage is frequently reduced to its optical impression, its surface, forcing the aspect of original substance and the applied technique, which are core elements of heritage, out of the focus. Often, the aspect of usability also stands in the foreground, thus reducing heritage to a “nice shell”.

Traditional handicrafts are falling out of use, because they are in comparison with modern approaches for contemporary buildings significantly more time-consuming and therefore understood as “not effective”. Though for several decades traditional handicrafts have been partially rediscovered, this has not led to a fundamental change – traditional handicrafts are often only applied at highly valuable heritage sites, used by heritage-lovers or demonstrated in a musealised way.

However, it is not only the economical aspect which puts traditional handicraft under pressure; sometimes it is also the desire for spotlessness and the lack of appreciation for the individual aspects of handicraft works, the small nuances in the colour and others. But often, the reason is simply missing knowledge –

about the traditional handicraft itself, its applicability, its constructive, physical and aesthetic advantages.

Young heritage professionals need this knowledge to be able to undertake decisions which are in accordance with a heritage site, its history, its value. But traditional handicraft is usually not taught academically; the teaching schedule in formal education does not provide the frame for this, and often does even not awake the needed sensitivity.

On the other hand, the craftsmen who possess this knowledge exist, and many of them are glad to share it with younger people. In some cases, traditional techniques are dying out, in other cases the situation is less dramatic, but there are not many opportunities provided for this transmission of knowledge. Finally, there are young heritage lovers who discovered their passion for a particular traditional handicraft and are eager to share it with others.

In order to preserve and distribute the knowledge and skills in traditional handicrafts, European Heritage Volunteers developed the structure of European Heritage Training Courses which are aimed at both skilled young craftsmen as well as interested amateurs without formal education, but with dedication to traditional handicraft.

The courses focus on traditional joinery and carpentry, traditional masonry,

plaster techniques and others and provide knowledge in techniques which were essential in the traditional practice of these handicrafts. In some cases, they focus on very specific handicrafts such as traditional shingle making or cooperage, often with a strong regional focus. The spectrum is extended with conservation and restoration techniques, such as restoration of wooden elements, stone conservation or conservation of historic surfaces, as well as courses in heritage documentation and heritage stratigraphy.

European Heritage Training Courses are led by experienced craftsmen with years of experience in the field, younger craftsmen with additional education in traditional techniques and certification as “Restorer in Handicraft”, certificated conservators-restorers, or architects with experience in the field of heritage conservation. The training courses last one to two weeks and combine theoretical education with practical training and a final application at endangered sites, thus contributing to their conservation, restoration and revitalisation.

In the future, European Heritage Volunteers will further increase the number of training courses and extend their thematic spectrum since they do not only provide an optimal frame for the preservation of traditional knowledge and skills, but also offer an optimal frame to link theory and practice in the field of heritage conservation.



TRADITIONAL DRY STONE WALLING

Various locations · Germany

Repairing a historic wall helps us understand our ancestors

Working with stone materials has been a part of human history literally since the Stone Age. All over the earth, stones are available near the surface, which is why they remained the most important means of mass construction until modern times. In contrast to wood, stone is characterised by its durability against environmental influences. That's why many heritage sites, especially the oldest ones, are built primarily with this material.

We stand amazed before the buildings of our ancestors, yet at the same time we are tasked with preserving them. Since their construction we've developed modern methods and technology for this, but we don't always do justice to the true concerns. After all, the traditional handcrafts – which sometimes produced incredible feats of engineering – are themselves cultural heritage. Knowledge about the workmanship of natural materials was passed down from person to person and from generation to generation for millennia. Following industrialisation, many acquired skills began to become lost as work was increasingly taken over by machines.

On my professional path to becoming a master bricklayer, I was able to see, learn and ask a lot from older, more experienced craftsmen. Through my practical work, which includes a wide

range of repairs on a variety of structures, I was able to continue the tradition of these tried-and-tested techniques for nearly four decades. I'm now happy to pass on my wealth of experience to interested members of the next generation.

Using the example of dry stone walls, which can be found all over Europe and even worldwide in various forms, I was able to demonstrate and teach project participants construction principles in combination with professional heritage conservation approaches. Such a wall was built in Belvedere Castle Park in Weimar to protect the duke's kitchen garden, but it has decayed and become overgrown with plants in the intervening decades. The task was to restore it for visitors, so they could experience the original boundaries which defined the space.

Participants were able to quickly acquire this skill which most people are familiar with from childhood, provided that they played with building blocks. After relaying the ground rules and explaining the handling of basic tools as well as the characteristics of the natural stone material, everyone was in the position to (re-)construct a stable wall from a simple mountain of various stones. By rotating task assignments, I drew the participants' attention to the fact that construction was and is a coordinated, collective effort.



In addition, it was important to me that participants experienced the physical effort required to extract and process building materials. In doing so, I was able to make them aware that there is already human labour in every broken stone, which needs to be valued – all the more so since it still requires further effort before finding its final place in the wall. Following the countless necessary hand movements, everyone could fully understand the age-old adage that half of construction is transportation. Therefore, it's more effective to take the existing materials on-site, clean and sort them and, if possible, use them to create a functional and harmonious whole as our ancestors did. Thus, the so-called human element can be rediscovered, and I was able to demonstrate that it can be worthwhile to think first in local and regional, rather than global dimensions.



During the wall's reconstruction, I also familiarised participants with the basics of stone processing and let them try out for themselves. This way, everyone could get an idea of how difficult it is to get a stone into the desired shape. On the other hand, each time I demonstrated something I was amazed at the effect of theoretically known laws of physics in practice; how even a seemingly delicate young woman can lift a heavy stone with ease.

My work for European Heritage Volunteers gives me the opportunity to pass on longstanding knowledge and experiences to those who must deal with these issues in the future. My commitment should also show what fulfilment the construction of a wall can bring when it's accomplished without pressure or coercion. Working practically together and learning from each other quickly creates a strong bond which minimises differences in language or countries of origin.

The lively interest and enthusiasm of young people have always impressed me. Besides that, at the end of the project, I experienced their great joy and pride at what they built together with their own hands. My greatest wish is fulfilled if the participants take a little of my life's philosophy and work ethic with them back into the world.

■ *Peter Trescher*
Technical instructor

Building walls, building connections – the importance of learning tradition skills

I believe that when setting out to help others, you also will help yourself. As Audrey Hepburn wrote: “As you grow older, you will discover you have two hands, one for helping your self, the other for helping others.” Perhaps the benefits to yourself are not immediately obvious, but you will almost always take away learning that can be applied again in the future, to be built upon, and passed on to others as it was given to you. Scientific studies have proven time and again that undertaking good deeds will likely lead to more, and when you volunteer, the experience stays with you forever. In the environment of the European Heritage Volunteers Programme, not only do you have the opportunity to gain a high personal sense of achievement in what you have created and the work you have contributed, but also the nature of the projects means that you will also expand your network and community. You will volunteer with people you otherwise would never have crossed paths with, from different countries and cultures, and with whom you share the experience of learning about inherent cultural heritage that is often internationally important.

In 2018 the art of dry stone walling was inscribed on the UNESCO Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity for eight European countries. Some dry stone walls

in north-west Europe date back to the time of Prehistory where since this time humans have used the natural resources around them to create both useful and beautiful structures. Dry stone walls have been used in the past to modify the rural landscape in which we live and use today, and these structures still exist in perfect harmony with their environment. The traditional skill of dry stone wall building is passed on exclusively through practical teaching and learning, specifically adapted to the individual environment and resources available in each location.

The process of learning traditional skills such as dry stone walling, especially as a volunteer, is about making connections. Connections between the teacher, student, volunteer, and fellow learner volunteers, and also the connection with nature, and a specific time and place. Learning to build a dry stone wall also builds a connection from the present to the past, as you work in the same way those who came before you have done, to carefully and respectfully continue their work, using those very same methods as generations before you. The walls we construct resonate with us, as a result of the memories held in the construction of the walls, building an invisible link back to our ancestors, reminding us where we came from, and providing us with a way to find permanency within the modern landscape,

as it changes around us. “If you do not know where you come from, then you don’t know where you are, and if you don’t know where you are, then you don’t know where you’re going. And if you don’t know where you’re going, you’re probably going wrong.” (*Terry Pratchett*)

The traditional skills of rural craftsmen are at risk of being forgotten in the modern world, as the way we live and use the landscape changes as time goes on and technology advances. Many of us now lead busy lives in towns and cities, and in the modern period we are no longer connected to the landscape as our ancestors once were. It takes a purposeful act of seeking out nature, working on projects outside to be reminded of the benefits to our physical and mental health, which come from spending time outdoors. Dry stone walling is a peaceful, positive and thoughtful experience which encourages mindfulness and awareness of nature, working in a careful and sustainable way with natural materials. The method of teaching by the masters in the European Heritage Training Courses provides an understanding of both how and why dry stone walls have been built in each particular environment and individual context, and teaches us that we do not have to build quickly, but instead work methodically to produce a structure of quality that will last decades, if not hundreds of years.



My own initial experience learning as a beginner how to build dry stone walls was as a volunteer at the UNESCO World Heritage site of the Upper Middle Rhine Valley, in the west of Germany. The river Rhine, which forms part of the site, has been a link between the northern and southern parts of Europe since the time of pre-history, enabling trade and cultural exchange between different peoples since this time. The steep slopes of the river valley have been shaped by past and present human activity, with dry stone walls to create terraces cultivated as vineyards. The Romans were responsible for introducing viticulture to the wider region, and the dry stone walls in the valley vineyards have been in use since it reached this part of the Rhine in the 11th century. Without these terraces, formed by the landscaped soil and dry stone walls, the vines would not have been able to have been cultivated here on the steep slopes, as the

stone walls help to retain the land and water in heavy rain storms and create a stepped side by which people can climb the hills to plant and harvest grapes. Rebuilding the dry stone walls in the valley is a constant process, to maintain the vineyards and allow the grapes to grow. Due to the steep nature of the land, all of the work here is carried out by hand. Understanding the nature of the environment in which we were volunteering and experiencing how much work goes into the maintenance of this historic landscape really made us appreciate the wine all the more when we were able to taste it ourselves.

When learning how to build dry stone walls within the European Heritage Volunteers Programme, this one traditional skill is not taught in isolation, but the projects also teach about the importance of the maintenance of the wider landscape. For the Upper Middle Rhine Valley project, we were also taught about the maintenance of habitats important for wildlife that benefit the vines, we worked with local experts to help to restore old, out-of-use vineyards back into production, and of course, a first-hand look at how the wine is produced. Alongside educational visits and guided tours to learn about the history of the World Heritage site, this practical and theoretical approach to learning about cultural heritage provided us with a holistic view of the project and our contribution to it, and an understanding of the

many issues and considerations to take into account when managing heritage sites.

On my return from Germany, I was keen to apply my new skills back at home in the United Kingdom. As a volunteer with The National Trust, an environmental and heritage conservation charity, I began to be involved with a small group of mainly older retired volunteers who meet at least twice a month to restore and rebuild historic dry stone walls in my local area. As an integral part of the managed historic landscape, dry stone walls in this part of England are used as stock proof barriers for farmers' livestock, such as cows and sheep, and provide a valuable habitat for wildlife. When stripping out the walls and preparing the ground we would find artefacts, such as clay pipes, which indicate that the walls we were restoring were at least one hundred years old. I continue to volunteer with the group now, working in typically wet and cold British weather conditions with different stones and different techniques, still drawing upon what I had learnt first in the Upper Middle Rhine Valley. This demonstrates the worthwhile learning experience gained with European Heritage Volunteers, as it continues to inspire me to be a lifelong learner, and pursue heritage education beyond just the individual projects, sharing these experiences, to benefit other communities and heritage sites across Europe.

In 2019 during the European Heritage Training Course at the UNESCO World Heritage site of Classical Weimar in Thuringia, Germany, we worked on the restoration of a dry stone wall, which formed part of an early 19th century former kitchen garden, as part of the wider historic landscape at Belvedere Castle. Here we were provided with many learning opportunities about the history of the city, its rulers who shaped it, and the ideas and philosophies behind the evolution of Weimar as a place and how the cultural centre continued into the 20th century.

The kitchen garden is in an area now much overgrown and no longer frequented by visitors. It currently lies dormant, awaiting the next intake of volunteers to help restore this part of the castle grounds to its former glory. The dry stone wall here was in part a functional structure to prevent wild animals and trespassers from gaining access to the garden which would have grown fruits, vegetables and flowers for the Duke of Saxe-Weimar. The apple trees were still standing along the south side of the garden, and restoration of the historic steps and path was undertaken alongside the reconstruction of the wall. Our work instructor provided us with historic photographs of the wall before it had reached its ruinous state, to demonstrate what the eventual restored structure would look like again once our work is completed here.



The wall also contained a decorative archway designed to look out over the nearby rural landscape, and this stone window would have provided picturesque views out towards the countryside of Weimar. The aesthetic beauty and simplicity of the construction of the kitchen garden wall was explained to us, as a structure built of stone pulled from the earth at the side of the stream, adjacent to the garden, and made beautiful by arranging the stones in a specific patterns, which meant they would join together to create one strong wall, which would last for at least another hundred years or so.

One key piece of learning I have taken from volunteering with European Heritage Volunteers and also when applying my learning back in the United Kingdom, is that small actions can have a large impact. In building a dry stone wall, a single piece of stone is only one individual element, but when put together they can create something strong, that will stand the test of time, and become a monument in the landscape. In the same manner, volunteers

working together as a team under the guidance of an experienced master can make a real difference to important historic places, and we as volunteers will also go on to share this knowledge and experience with others to continue this legacy, even after the end of a course, bringing what we have learnt to new and different historic places. This final thought on the subject is best reflected in the famous quotation attributed to the 19th century English philosopher Herbert Spencer, “The great aim of education is not knowledge but action.”

■ *Sarah Hannon-Bland*
Participant





TRADITIONAL WOODEN SHINGLE MAKING

Ore Mountains · Germany

Working with wood – a meditative activity

The European Heritage Training Course led me to Freiberg, a small city in Saxony with a long history. The course provided me insight to a special handicraft – traditional wooden shingle making. During the course, I gained theoretical knowledge and practical skills, but what I liked the most is that by learning and practicing this historical handicraft technique, I achieved a deeper understanding of its background, its relation to other handicrafts, and how it is done correctly and why.

Our working place was the heap of *Alte Elisabeth* mine, one of the highest artificial hills in the region, composed out of soil left over after ore extraction and processing. To me, it was quite impressive to realise how this landscape was shaped by human intervention in nature. From the top, it provides a picturesque view of gardens at the foot of the hill with the silhouette of the historical town in the background. On top of this heap, the historic buildings of the *Alte Elisabeth* mine, which were mostly built in the mid-19th century, are situated. When it was sunny, we worked outside, and when it rained, we were extremely lucky to work inside the building which houses the unique *Schwarzenbergebläse*. This waterwheel-powered blowing engine is a masterpiece of mechanical engineering and was one of the largest blowing engines worldwide at the time of its construction in

1829. It was a special pleasure for me to observe this incredible, neo-gothic beauty of engineering while working.

Kai, our master, explained every step of the shingle making process to us with joy and patience. At first, he showed us some ready-made prototypes of correct shingles. Each shingle was like a very sharp triangle, from 1.5 to 2.5 centimetres thick, around 15 to 20 centimetres in width and around 50 centimetres in length. On one side a shingle had an inside V-groove to use it as a joint point to insert one shingle into another. Shingle making has several steps and only by hands-on-experience you can apply the theoretical knowledge and experience which shingle is correct and will last long and which one will go into decay soon.



The initial step is the preparation of logs into billets. From my view, it is one of the most difficult processes since it requires physical strength and patience. All of us tried to do it at least once, but to be honest, most of the time the boys worked on this part. To prepare the billets we used axes – without handle, only the axe head – to split cedar stumps into halves. To do so, we struck heads of the axe in two opposite sides of the diameter of the log.

The next step was to remove five centimetres from the core of the log and five to ten centimetres from the outer side. Cutting the core of the log after first splits helps to make a correct division into pieces, while it's necessary to cut the outer circles because it is the youngest part of the tree and thus more porous. For this operation, we used a traditional carpentry tool – the froe. To understand how a froe works it is best to have used one. A froe is quite rare and expensive tool and can be rapidly damaged if it's struck with metal, therefore it is mandatory to use only a wooden mallet to strike a froe.

We split the prepared logs into smaller pieces of around ten degrees angle to form base billets for roof shingles.

The next step, the shingle shaping, is a meditative repetition of actions; it gives strength in your hands and legs and peace to your mind. You sit on the shaving bench – a type of carpentry bench – and step on the pedal to fix in one position a billet of the future shingle.



Then you start using a drawknife to finalise the shape of shingle into the ideal proportion, careful to craft a straight surface, without spikes. Master Kai taught us how to feel the surface of a correct shingle and how to replicate it through shaping. The best shingle is one that does not have branch nodes and tissues breaks, which means that the natural structure of the tree is not damaged. Meanwhile machine-made shingles last only for ten years and soon start to rot; correctly handmade

shingles, whose wooden structure is not damaged, remain water-resistant for a longer amount of time and can last up to thirty or even forty years.

Overall, the training course was a very interesting experience because to occupy oneself with intangible cultural heritage is the best way to learn about the best practices of our past. The European Heritage Training Courses provide

an affordable experience to expand your heritage knowledge and to gain practical skills. It is enriching and useful for everybody – not only for heritage professionals, but also people who are not related to the cultural heritage field, because it will help you in your everyday life.

■ *Albina Davletshina*
Participant

From underground to the shingled rooftop

The Ore Mountains are a transboundary region in Germany and Czechia characterised by the mining and processing industry. But that is not the only natural resource that one can find there.

Wood is essential for mining activity. It is needed to build tools and transportation material such as barrels. But mostly, wood helps to control a third natural element: water. Water is both a problem and a solution, while wood is the resource in the middle. To take water out of the mines, wood is used in a pumping system powered by the strength of the water itself. Mechanisms as water wheels are built from wood that resists harsh conditions and the passage of time.

Expansion of the mines brought a consequent need for more wood. The growth cycle of trees was not sufficient for the rhythm of work in the mines, and the negative impact of such depen-

dence was causing massive deforestation. Fortunately, among the brilliant local engineers and craftsmen who earned statues located in the surrounding cities, there was also Hans Carl von Carlowitz. His solution to wood scarcity was based on a careful timber management plan for the land. Even though this happened in the 17th century, this concept of sustainability seems to fit quite well in the current era. Each tree is precious for many reasons and they are still needed to keep the traditional landscape alive. This resource was the central topic for the European Heritage Training Course “Traditional wooden shingle techniques”.

We arrived and huge tree logs were waiting for us. If one day I was excited and cutting logs in slices like a pizza, the next day my muscles were sore. Working with wood is a hard task. There was wood everywhere, combined with iron,

creating an industrial atmosphere. Even the work bench was made of wood. We were fortunate to have a building of the *Alte Elisabeth* mine, which is a beautiful monument itself, as a workshop.

The fact that we were an international group sharing our stories also contributed to a nice atmosphere during the daily work. But we had to keep focused on the execution. Even though it looked easy, not everything was what it seems. Each shingle had to have a perfect degree of inclination and a precise space where the shingle would fit into the next one. Our eyes were still not skilled enough for such detail, and the first pack of shingles was so imperfect that it had to face a destiny other than becoming roof shingles. But practice makes perfect, and soon we were working well.

And the work of an apprentice can only be successful with a good work instructor. Even though the language could be an obstacle in some situations, such as naming the tools and techniques, such difficulty was quickly overcome with the learning-by-doing method. The transmission of knowledge between different generations was just wonderful. Not only the fact that experienced people were available and happy to share what they know with a younger group, but also the willingness to learn and absorb every detail from the side of the participants. Although I was not very talented in this task, I still remember

some details that, if I had not made them with my hands, I would have forgotten then by now.

But the transmission of knowledge goes beyond the work and respective work instructors. The course was completed by an intensive educational programme where we were introduced to different perspectives that complemented our work and put the whole region into context. We learned about the mining traditions of the region and about other handicrafts that were part of the daily reality of the Ore Mountains, like blacksmithing and lace making. But the most special thing was hearing stories from the locals. Can you imagine how funny it was to hear an 80-year-old man say he thought there was a ghost in the mine? In the end, there was no ghost – it was just a water wheel that was not blocked when the mine had been deactivated and occasionally turned, making noise.

But the thought of ghosts is not even half as scary as when I first went down into a mine. After what seemed to be an endless elevator ride, we entered the dark underground. But then, the lights were turned off and there was only candlelight. I couldn't see my feet – yet this is all the light each miner had. I still get goose bumps just for thinking about it. And I was told that I – just one and a half metres tall – had the perfect miner's size, so you can already imagine how small the corridors were. Looking



at that, the basic tools, and the noise of trying to drill a couple of millimetres per day into the stone wall, made me think how brave the miners were.

It is impossible not to feel emotional when faced with this tangible reality, and even more so when witnessing the intangible mining atmosphere. Hearing the miners singing is one memory I will never forget. I was amazed by the traditions and the artwork that you can find in many museums in the region. Like the *Schwibbogen*, a candle holder made out of wood, which is another use of this raw material in the region. This connection between men, ore, wood, technique, art, and tradition were some of the reasons to justify the region's inscription in the UNESCO World Heritage List. But for us, participants in this training course, being there was more than learning the history. It was also about living this experience. When going down into the mine or climbing up to put wooden shingle in the roof, one could always hear a warm *Glück auf* – the regional greeting, which means “Good luck”.

■ *Mariana Martinho*
Participant



RESTORATION OF HISTORIC PLASTERS AND SURFACES

Various locations · Germany

Historic surfaces have a lot of layers – visible and invisible ones

Before I began to lead seminars and training courses in the field of conservation and restoration of historic plasters and painted surfaces, I worked for several decades as a freelance restorer.

Besides aiming to achieve high quality through the restoration process itself, I constantly strive to keep the materials I use as authentic as possible, which means producing them myself. From my point of view, it is important not only to carry out restoration process well, but also to preserve the knowledge about the preparation of historical mortar and paints and to keep it alive by using them today. It is our task to preserve the knowledge of these techniques by transmitting them to the younger generation as traditional techniques are part of our intangible heritage.

I led two European Heritage Training Courses – the first one in winter 2018 at a workshop in Quedlinburg and a heritage site in Halberstadt, the second one in summer 2019 in Erxleben Castle, all located in Saxony-Anhalt, Germany. The programme was aimed at young heritage professionals and students in heritage-linked fields and dealt with historic plasters and paints. In particular, the training courses focused on three topics: I taught the participants to prepare and to apply mortars and paints in accordance to historic recipes, to uncover historic painted surfaces, and

to carry out decorative paintings, in particular wood imitation using paints on beer basis.

Since we need lime as a component of lime mortar and of casein paint, and since lime has been known for millennia in all cultural areas, both training courses started with the lime slaking process. Although it is known from theory that the extinguishing process creates high temperatures, it was surprising for some participants to see the cooking process live – it boiled and bubbled in the pot and got really hot.

As a next step, I taught the production and application of clay plaster in the first course, and in the second course, plaster additions with slaked lime mortar. In addition, on the basis of a finding that showed a larger lump of lime, I suggested to re-adjust the so-called *Kalkspatzenmörtel*, a special lime mortar with lumps of pure lime.

The next part included the application of the mortars. The programme of the two training courses differed only by the mortar used – clay and lime mortar, respectively –, the steps were otherwise identical. Before applying the plaster, it has to be mixed with the blunger. In the beginning, the work with the blunger felt a bit unfamiliar for some of the participants, but after some practice, the mortar could be prepared quickly

to allow continuous work. The preparation of the lime plaster was a little more extensive, since the mortar was first tapped, premixed and additionally mixed with hemp fibres.

After a brief introduction to the use of the tools, the work began with the cleaning of the existing structure. In order to prevent the plaster from tearing off, the participants applied lime mortar at an angle to the edges of the original plasters with small plaster irons.

Thereafter, the liquid priming was applied, followed by a plaster undercoat and finally the finishing coat. Since the plaster layers were applied with a trowel to achieve better adhesion and expel air, a loose wrist was necessary. But after some practice, the participants could put the plaster on the wall and see their daily progress.

Since the new surface structure had to be adapted to the original, the surface was slightly smoothed after grouting with the trowel. The next day, the sintered layers were removed by rubbing with a jute fabric. The result was a two-layer fresco painting, created by cross-painting the previously slaked lime with an oval brush.

Although the plastering is generally associated with a lot of dirt, I did not have the impression that when working

with clay or limestone the participants felt displeasure. All the steps – from mixing to transport and processing by tapping with the trowel – were unfamiliar and exhausting, but the result made the participants happy.

In the following part of the course, dedicated to the uncovering of historic painted surfaces, the participants were able to prove their instincts. With concentration and sensitivity, the scalpel was guided over the surface to remove younger layers of paint without damaging the painting underneath. The post-purification with distilled water and cotton then revealed a floral ornamentation on a wooden imitation. Here success was immediately visible.



The next step involved training exercises on decorative painting. As with the plaster, the paints used here were also produced from scratch. The basic medium was flax oil, casein or beer,

which was mixed with pigments. In order to obtain a comprehensive recipe for the further work, the pigments were weighed, and the recipe written down.

Finally, the participants were taught how to imitate wooden surfaces. Imitation is an old technique, aiming to fool the eye. It was carried out with a beer-based glaze, since historically beer was used as a binder beside oil. Some participants were quite sceptical at the beginning, but after the specific steps were explained and demonstrated, they came around. After creating the base paint, creativity and imagination were given free reign. The surface was beaten with brushes and the paint distributed in accordance to the individual preferences, and as a result, there were diverse wooden patterns. Finally, the participants could apply this new skill

to two original doors from a heritage site which was under reconstruction.

The two training courses proved that people sincerely interested in heritage, despite having very different backgrounds of knowledge, experiences and cultures, can achieve great results and make a major contribution to the conservation of heritage sites.

For the work done, as well as for the inspiring atmosphere, I would like to thank European Heritage Volunteers and all participants. It was a wonderful experience and a great pleasure for me to guide the training courses for such highly dedicated and motivated young people from all over Europe and beyond.

■ *Artur-Oliver Raupach*
Technical instructor

You only see what you know

The knowledge of traditional handicraft techniques is fundamental to the proper handling of historical monuments. Many of our architectural monuments are the product of craftsmanship traditions whose methods of execution and handling are increasingly being forgotten. One knows only what can be seen. And only what you see can be preserved in the best possible way. This means that knowledge and understanding of traditional crafts can form the basis for a

long-term and sustainable conservation which is extremely appropriate for the conservation of historical monuments. In order to achieve this understanding, both theoretical and practical knowledge is required.

During the European Heritage Training Course “Historic colours and surfaces”, which was organised by European Heritage Volunteers in cooperation with *Deutsches Fachwerkzentrum Quedlin-*

burg, a combination of theory and practice provided a comprehensive insight into traditional handicraft techniques. The programme included theoretical and practical introductions in the workshops, lectures by the organisers and the participants, as well as working on a heritage site.

Firstly, the master explained the general composition of historical colours and to what extent this knowledge is important in order to be able to appropriately carry out restoration work. The next step was dedicated to beer glaze, a technique that aims to imitate the look of wood. This method has a centuries-old tradition, due to the fact that the desired look of a certain wood species could be produced cheaply and often. In addition to beer, different coloured pigments are needed, especially in earth tones. Depending on the mixing ratio, these two basic materials tend to be glazed or opaque and are applied with different brushes in different bristle thicknesses and shapes. For the annual wood rings, it is recommended to use a darker colour than the actual wood colour, so the contrast of the colours will give the painted wood a livelier appearance of texture. The individual layers of glaze that gradually allow the wood to develop must each be secured with shellac to prevent the pigments from coming off.

After being introduced to the beer glaze, we practiced on a test piece ourselves

before finally designing a door with this technique. This door later found its place in a monument. Contrary to our test piece, we had to pay special attention to the fact that the painted grain of the wood stain corresponds to the construction method, so that all components of the individual treatments produced a realistic overall picture.

In addition to the beer glaze, we were able to apply another historical painting technique to our personal specimen: casein painting, which also has a long tradition. The colours of the pigments are bound with the milk protein creating stronger colours, which are brighter and opaquer than the translucent application of the pigments bound with beer.

The second part of the training course enabled us to gain further insights into particular works which can only be carried out on site. Through explanations by the master we learned more about the processes and methods and were able to test the necessary measures with the various tools and materials independently, but under permanent guidance. Small pieces of work often seem laborious, but they make it possible to preserve a heritage site in an adequate and sustainable way.

A highlight of the training course was when we were carefully exposing a ceiling painting, where, when removing a later plaster layer with a scalpel, concentration and sure instinct were re-

quired. At conclusion of the course, the master gave the group a special experience: each of us was allowed to decorate a particular element of a door with gold leaf.

In summary, the European Heritage Training Course was very informative and interesting for us. In addition to getting to know and applying historical handicraft techniques, we were also able to see where and how these techniques are used in historical buildings. The mixture of theory and practice was varied and offered many opportunities to try out and learn what was discussed. Through a lively exchange in the group, we could compare all of our experiences, thus helping us better understand our individual contributions within the overall context of the project.

As the different technical skills and interests of the individual participants were taken into account, each participant was able to try out different areas and tasks and simultaneously contribute to the conservation of a heritage site.

Ultimately, the European Heritage Training Course also showed us how much work is hidden behind the visible and how much knowledge is necessary in order to be able to take the best possible measures for a heritage site.

■ *Farah Berger & Nadine Griesinger*
Participants



TRADITIONAL MASONRY AND TRADITIONAL VAULTS

Tematín Castle · Slovakia

Two weeks which jump-started our motivation

Tematín Castle is situated in western part of Slovakia, on a side ridge of the Považský Inovec mountain range at an altitude of six hundred meters above the sea level. It was part of the chain of border castles defending against Hungarian forces and for better defense, it was placed far away from nearest village and. Now it is considered to be one of the least accessible castles in Slovakia.

Archaeological research indicates that the first brick buildings of the castle were built around 1250, during a period of Tatar invasion, to serve as both guard and refuge in case of threat. In 1311, a large defensive tower was built. The first documentary evidence of the castle was found from 1347 when King Louis I donated it to Vavrínek Tót of Raholec. It witnessed several battles from which it was partially damaged, but never conquered. It began losing its renown as an unconquerable fortress towards the end of the 18th century, since at that time the nobility were building more luxurious and more comfortable mansions in the lowlands. After the suppression of uprisings and general persecution in 17th century, the castle was damaged by the imperial troops in the year 1710. The last written document dates back to 1721, which states that the castle was devoid of any property and that it was no longer manned or guarded. Today the castle is surrounded by a unique and protected natural landscape.



As of the year 2007, the castle has remained in the care of the Tematín Castle Association. With the help of volunteers and staff, its members explore and preserve the castle. During these years, they have managed to stabilise several parts of the castle, preventing their complete downfall. The aim is to maintain the atmosphere of the castle as part of the beautiful countryside without allowing any massive interferences or new constructions. In performing the necessary work, they apply contemporaneous procedures of mortar composition and use traditional

ways of masonry and carpentry. The goal of the association is to use the castle for workshops where can anyone learn different traditional crafts.

The European Heritage Training Course at Tematín castle in 2019 lasted two weeks and had eleven total participants. Our association has been working on the rescue of the castle for twelve years and we already had experience organising various projects with international participants. The results of our work have been awarded with several prizes over the last years,



among them the nomination for ICOMOS Slovakia award. During this time, our members have become professionals who are leaving their traces among various monuments throughout the whole country. We've had multiple experiences with volunteers from out-of-heritage fields, where we had to struggle to structure the programme in a way that kept their attention and motivated them to an acceptable performance. Various problems had occurred recently which depleted our motivation, and we had decided to decrease our work to a minimum as the planned objectives were hardly achieved, and the castle had begun to limit our personal life significantly.

However, the training course within the framework of the European Heritage Volunteers Programme was something totally different. Foreign volunteers came from various countries, who studied various fields focused on research and protection of monuments. Already within the first couple of days, we were surprised by endless interest in any and all information from the side of the participants. Various specific questions and deep discussions forced us to think about the real basis of our approach to cultural monument rescue. Suddenly, we started to perceive mistakes which we'd started to overlook as soon as our work became a routine. New knowledge and the tireless work of the participants – who we had to keep them away from continuously working by taking away

their tools – deeply moved us. They carefully applied everything we taught them, and it was rewarding for us to see that if we missed something, they figured it out on their own.

This unique experience jump-started our motivation like a rocket, and our local castle volunteers started to create new plans, study and look for new information, educate themselves, and participate in other projects from which they may draw new inspiration for the castle. Most likely, the foreign volunteers did not realise that the real contribution of the training course was not their work at the castle, but the enthusiasm they awakened in our castle team. The real influence of the training course lies in the renewed interest of our local castle volunteers, as well as willingness to make further sacrifices for the castle.

What's most important is the fact that these few days moved our whole organisation, which was granted a second wind. We shall spread our knowledge more intensively and more carefully, so that we can do the maximum for our monuments. We want express great thanks to European Heritage Volunteers for this unique gift. We warmly encourage any potential partner to participate in any collaborative projects with European Heritage Volunteers.

■ *Mojmír Choma*
Project Coordinator

One of the best experiences in my life

In 2019, I participated at a European Heritage Training Course at Tematín Castle. It was my first time working as a volunteer and I am certain that there is not even a single bit of regret.

My experience in Slovakia can not be explained in words because sometimes words don't do justice. Before applying to the project, I was confused, and to be honest, a bit scared. For me, it was clear that living and working in this thousand-year-old castle is not going to be a bed of roses. I had doubts about my physical strength because I was never involved in such intensive work, but again I overcame my doubt. I can confidently say that whatever I expected before the training course was fulfilled. I wanted to serve to the noble act of saving cultural heritage and European Heritage Volunteers helped me to achieve my goal.

In my opinion, the whole two-week long project was very well designed. I didn't feel for a single second like I wasn't contributing to the cause. It was genius to divide the project in a practical working part and a study part. During day time, we carried out practical work at different sites of the castle. First we learned the traditional technologies of stone masonry, stone selection, and lime slacking. Under the supervision of skilled craftsmen in the field of heritage conservation and restoration,

we managed to build two stone walls in one of the palaces of the castle with lime stones and lime mortar, using building techniques which had been used in Renaissance. It was a challenge to lift and place stones which were sometimes more than half of my own weight. We made not only physical but also mental contributions to the project by measuring and designing a stone vault of a medieval building in the castle.



The technical as well as educational tasks of the project were very well scheduled. We managed to do all the assigned tasks on time and with perfection. At first, it seemed impossible to complete all the tasks, but with a firm belief and strong encouragement from all participants as well as technical instructors, we successfully managed to pull everything. The main technical instructor, Mojmír Choma, was very kind and took great care of the participants. Throughout the project, he never left the site and was always keen to educate us about either the castle or the

culture and life in Slovakia. He taught us the history of the castle in depth, including all the reconstruction phases it has been through. He explained to us in detail about the complete conservation and restoration of the castle.

In the evenings, we performed educational and cultural activities. I was given the opportunity to present Altit Fort, a completely restored castle in northern Pakistan, to all the participants and the castle's staff. The other participants also presented one castle from each of their respective countries. On the weekend, we visited four historical castles nearby, as well as the historic city of Trenčín. In addition to this, the dedicated staff at the castle shared their customs and traditions with us by telling stories and tales, singing folk songs, cooking dishes and discussing politics and other world fares. Apart from all this, I made friends which will last for a really long time. On my first day, everyone was a stranger, but on my last, I did not want to leave. The training course was one of the best experiences of my life.

I am utterly proud of myself and grateful to the organisers of the training course for giving me this opportunity of a lifetime. I can not wait to participate in the courses happening next year!

■ *Barirah Tahir*
Participant



CONSERVATION OF STONE ELEMENTS

Palmatris Basilica · Bulgaria

The results of collaboration and enthusiasm

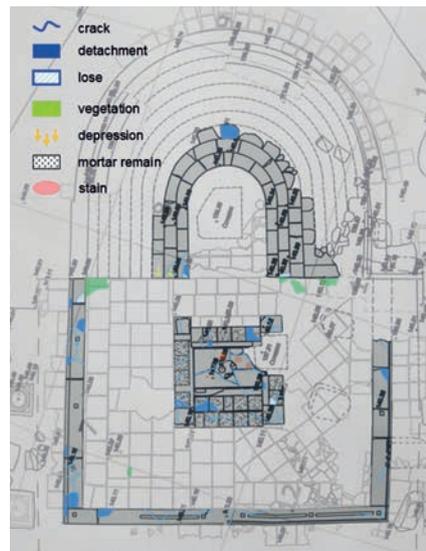
An early Christian basilica, hot weather and eight participants from eight different countries, who had a couple things in common. Firstly, their goal – to spend two weeks of their lives doing something useful for cultural heritage – and secondly, that they did not have a clue how to do it and what to expect at the end.

The 6th century early Christian basilica in Palmatis is a magnificent monument. It has the common three-aisle structure with a wide nave flanked by narrow side aisles. The aisles were separated by two lines of columns, of which fragments are partly preserved and scattered around. The participants realised immediately that these are not just piles of stone blocks in the middle of a beautiful landscape, but a part of an incredible heritage site and very important for the people back then. My personal goal was to teach them the process of conservation, but also to show them the importance of the conservator's work. The participants knew that with their minimum knowledge in this field and just two weeks available, it would not be easy to make a meaningful contribution to the basilica's conservation.

The training course started with the description of the type of building, the structure and its elements, the materials used, the condition of the particular elements and the damages. All cracks,

vegetation, soil depressions and any other damages were noted in the descriptive documentation, as well as in the technical drawing prepared by the archaeologist during the last excavations.

Once everything was drawn in small scale, we could assume what had happened. It became visible that most of the damages are concentrated in one area of the basilica – around the altar. The ruins of the basilica do not have shelter, so due to the climate influences, the soil in the northern part of the altar area sunk, leading to movement of the stone structure. The result of this is deteriorated lime mortar between the blocks, cracks and fallen parts of the limestone blocks.



Once we knew what the problem was and what had caused it, we decided what would be the best solutions for preventive treatment of the aforementioned area. This led to the second part of the documentation, where all the needed conservation activities were noted, including the needed materials. With this, the conservators who will work on this site in the future will know where to continue and what materials to use, and it provided also the basis for our own first conservation activities.



We started with mechanical cleaning of the area. Vegetation and dirt were removed, and we got a clear picture where to focus our future efforts. Due to the mechanical cleaning more cracks were revealed, and these were marked on the technical drawing. The next step was the consolidation of the material structure. Because of the annual changing of climate conditions, the lime mortar that holds the blocks was crumbling because the binder had lost

its function. Therefore, the mortar was revived with lime water which was applied with soft brushes. This process repeated until the results were satisfactory. In the end, the structure and the surface were strong enough to hold another layer of lime mortar. The next step was to reassemble the fallen pieces and fill the bigger gaps between limestone blocks. For this action we were using a lime mortar made of the same ingredients as the original.

I didn't want the participants to go home just with the satisfaction of finishing the task, but to understand and be involved in every step of the process, and to gain more skills. Measuring, mixing mortar or applying it – whatever the task was, they were willing to try it. Because most of the participants had a theoretical heritage-related background, but no experience in practical conservation, we decided that everything we were applying during



the conservation process should be reversible, thus if there would happen mistakes they could be easily repaired.

Because the limestone was very solid, all the fallen pieces had sharp edges. This meant that we could not use a glue to reattach them, because even a layer half a millimetre thick would bring the piece out of its original place. That's why we were just returned the pieces to their original places without glue and sealed all the missing parts and cracks around the piece with lime mortar. That was just enough to hold all the fallen pieces back together.

It was a big pleasure to work with this group. I extend my compliments to the European Heritage Volunteers for coming up with the brilliant idea of gathering volunteers from different countries all over the world and with different professions. It was nice to hear all the stories about their cultures and customs during the breaks and dinners. When I work with these kinds of groups, I always intend to separate the working time and the free time. But that didn't stop us from sharing some interesting stories during the work or discussing some conservation-related questions during dinner. On the contrary, this fact just helped us to bond even more and to be more efficient in what we were doing.

The participants showed their individual skills throughout the training

course. Some of them were good in the technical aspects like drawing or documentation, others in hands-on conservation, and some in making their own conservation proposals. It was a joy to hear about their experiences with tasks similar like this one, working at another site or comparing this basilica with a heritage site of similar significance in their country, or about other aspects related to conservation they had read about. At the very beginning, we shared excitement for the task and the pleasure of working together, but as the course came to an end, I realised that we also shared the determination to succeed. That's how the journey we had started together made us smarter, stronger and more appreciative of our surroundings in the end. If I could summarise my whole experience with this group shortly, it would look like this: the participants' greatest strength was their will to act as one. To come up with ideas, choose one, work on it, apply and improve it.

This group of volunteers, with only little or no previous experience in hands-on conservation, came to Bulgaria to help us professionals, and during this process they were transformed into heritage technicians. This wonderful combination of different characters, full of enthusiasm and the will to achieve their initial goal, is something that we need more in the field of cultural heritage conservation. All the more due to the lack of professionals or trained



workers involved in the heritage conservation, especially in the Balkans region. In the end, all participants, including the archaeologists, conservators, local volunteers, and the local community, were very satisfied with the professional quality and the results of the European Heritage Training Course. I cannot wait for the next course.

■ *Tome Filov*
Technical instructor

A deeply enriching and encouraging experience

Before being accepted for the European Heritage Training Course at the ancient city of Palmatis, Bulgaria felt like a far-away and unknown territory to me; and it was not only Bulgaria, but the whole Balkans region that felt this way. Despite sharing the same European territory and identity, the focus of attention that we receive in southwest Europe – both in formal education and in media – is barely placed in the Eastern territories; hence, they often become distant to us.

Nevertheless, this fact fostered my curiosity to participate in the course. I was excited to discover a country in which the culture would surely differ from the one in my country of origin. Moreover, by collaborating in the documentation and conservation of an archaeological site, I was going to be able to materialise some of the knowledge acquired during my studies, and

at the same time, I knew it was the perfect spot to make the acquaintance of people from different countries and backgrounds.

Before the departure, I tried to learn as much as I could about the country and its culture; investigating its interesting but complex history, trying to find films of local authors and even reading the classics of Bulgarian literature. This seemed to me like the ideal way to get the best out of the experience, and while that enabled me to soak up Bulgarian's history and culture, the best was yet to come.

At the meeting point, the Regional Historical Museum Dobrich, I met the other participants, the group coordinator, and some of the organisers and people closely collaborating in the project. After offering us a private guided tour of the museum's exhibition, we headed to our accommodation in Onogur, the original Dobrudja village where we would spend the next two weeks. The geographical origins of the volunteers were all different, from China to the USA, including India and four European countries: Germany, Norway, Russia and Spain. However, diversity could not only be found in our countries of origin, but also in our fields of expertise – archaeology, architecture, museum studies, conservation-restoration, but also biology.



Maybe at first glance, the commonalities between us were not very clear, but we were all sharing a common purpose, which from the beginning was the strongest connection by far.

After a few days getting to know the surroundings by doing things like a hike to discover the flora and fauna of the region, we started working in the archaeological site. The first approach to the architectural structures of the early Christian basilica was done by documenting the site, identifying the materials, photographing and mapping the different degradations and designing an intervention proposal. Afterwards, we performed the conservation procedures: cleaning, consolidation and fixation. Our technical instructors, Krassimira and Tome, taught, helped and joined us in every step of the project.



While working on the site, we eventually faced challenging situations. Working outdoors requires a lot of strength, passion and willpower; it is tough, and definitely not everyone's cup of tea. You always rely on the weather; therefore, you must try to foresee the next steps as best you can and be very flexible. We were starting work quite early in the morning, in order to be able to return at midday and avoid the sun's most intense hours. However, and despite the care that the technical instructors had regarding this fact, some days the "coffee break" was the one and only saviour from the suffocating Bulgarian summer. Notwithstanding the occasional difficulty of it all, it was a meaningful experience: realising that we were all there sharing a common purpose was empowering, and the feeling was strong enough to palliate the not so glamorous side of the project.

Besides the physical work in the site, we had lectures and cultural activities almost every day. In my mind, the planned schedule was the perfect balance between practice and theory. We were there to help in the conservation of the archaeological site but, at the same time, we were learning about materials science, inorganic conservation procedures and observing a lot of different intervention examples done in previous projects. We were overwhelmed by all the information; almost every day we were meeting new people bringing us new ideas, experiences and help. At this point, I realised that the project

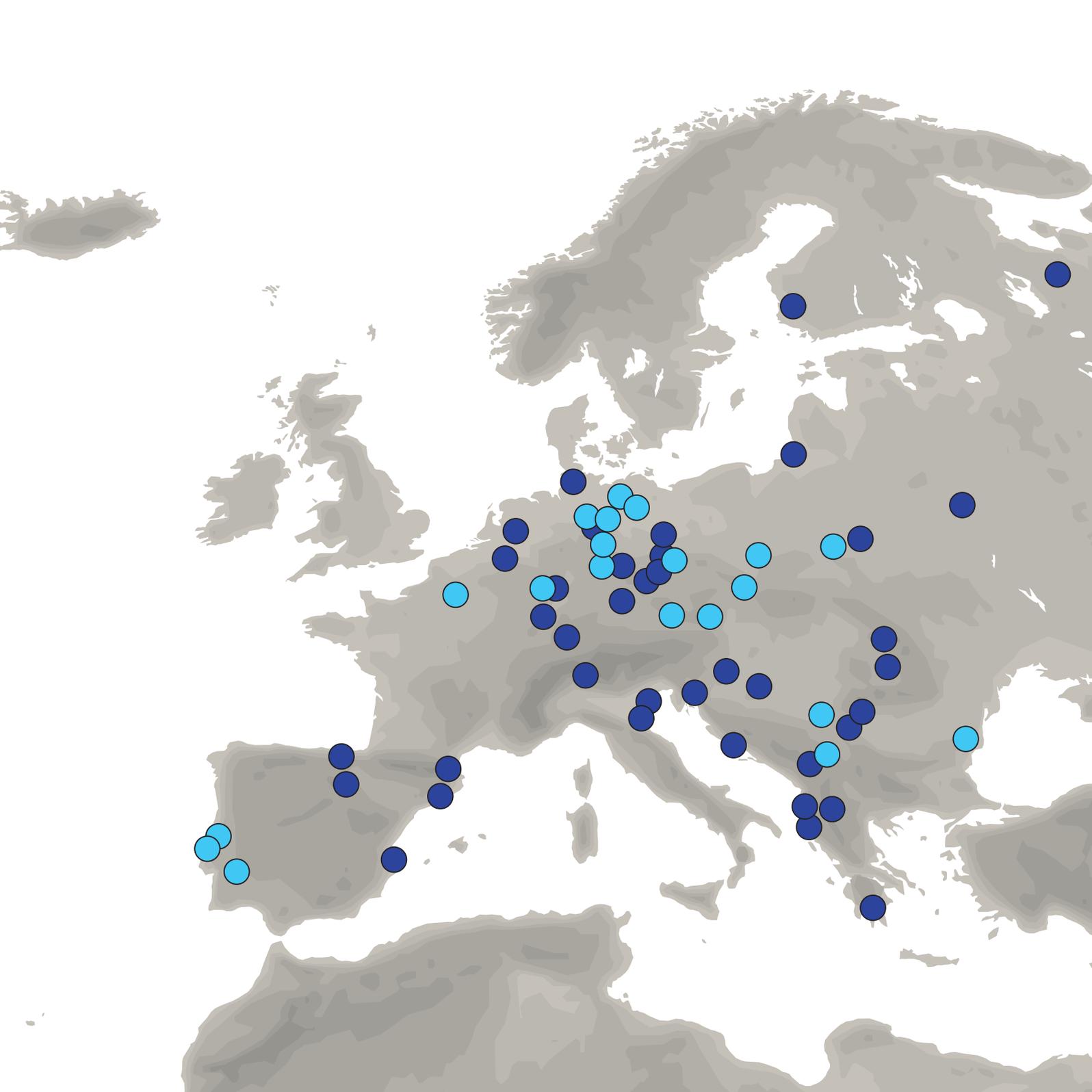
was broader than I ever thought before. At the end, it was all about people and exchange, about food and tradition, about music and dances, about feelings and, most importantly, about sharing.

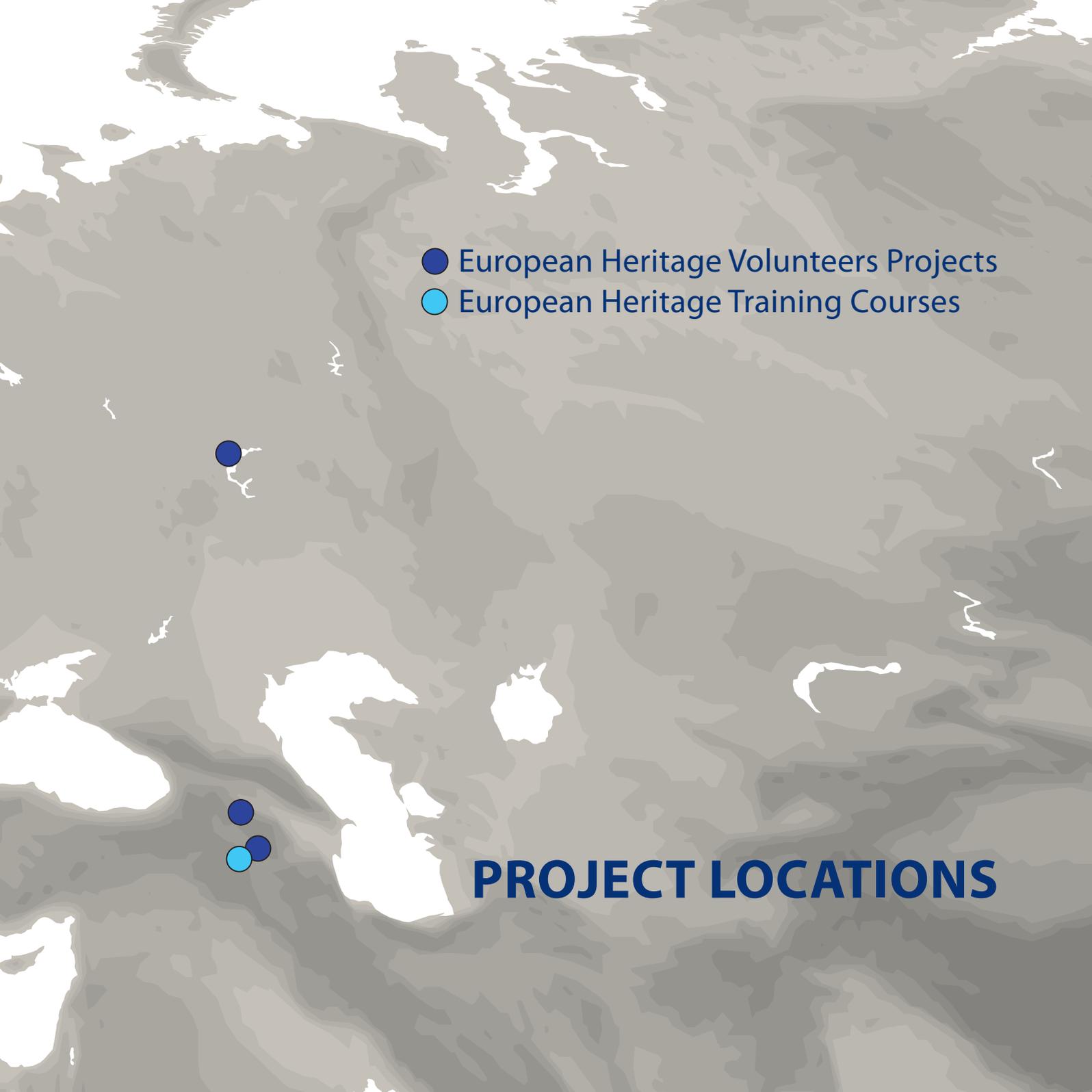
The moments shared with the other participants around the table, enjoying the traditional Bulgarian meals; on the terrace silently plunging in our respective reading and thoughts; in the house garden while having the chance to attend a class of traditional Bulgarian dance, or under the clear and bright Bulgarian night sky. The moments were shared with the rest of the people involved as well; highlighting the generosity of our technical instructors and of the organisers, the closeness of our Bulgarian group coordinator Petar, the kindness of the few neighbours in the little village of Onogur and, in general, the support of all the people that somehow contributed their grain of sand to the project.

All these moments and people shaped the project in a new and complex way. We were sharing engagement, values, material – and immaterial – heritage, and we were helping to enhance the importance of heritage by making it meaningful. It was the perfect example of cultural heritage as a social construction, and as a young heritage professional, it was a powerful, enriching, and above all, encouraging experience.

■ *Alicia Allué Valcarce*
Participant





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- The image shows a map of Europe with a legend and project locations. The legend is located in the upper right quadrant and contains two entries: a dark blue circle followed by the text 'European Heritage Volunteers Projects' and a light blue circle followed by the text 'European Heritage Training Courses'. On the map, there are four dots: one dark blue dot in the north of France, and a cluster of three dots in the southwest of France (near the Atlantic coast) consisting of two dark blue dots and one light blue dot. The text 'PROJECT LOCATIONS' is written in a large, bold, dark blue font in the lower right quadrant of the map.
- European Heritage Volunteers Projects
 - European Heritage Training Courses

PROJECT LOCATIONS



AUTHORS

Nargiz Aituganova, born in Tatarstan/Russia, has an M.A. in World Heritage studies from the University of Birmingham and works as research associate at the World Heritage Department of the Russian Scientific Research Institute for Cultural and Natural Heritage. She is member of ICOMOS Russia and the project coordinator of the European Heritage Volunteers Project at the Bolgar Historical and Archaeological Complex.

Alicia Allué Valcarce, born in Barcelona/Spain, studied conservation-restoration of cultural heritage at the University of Barcelona, where she focused on the field of preventive conservation and graphic document. Currently she is pursuing an M.A. in management of cultural heritage and museology. She is interested in the field of cultural tourism and creative industries, understanding the usage of material and immaterial cultural heritage as a tool to stimulate sustainable development in the economic and social field.

Juan Carlos Barrientos, born in Tegucigalpa/Honduras, studied law with a specialisation in international law at the *Universidad Tecnológica Centroamericana* and a minor in history. While concluding his M.A. in World Heritage studies at the *Brandenburgische Technische Universität* in Cottbus/Germany, he was working as a legal intern for the Environmental Law Centre of the International Union for Conservation of Nature.

Marina Batinic, born in Split/Croatia, has a B.A. and M.A. in art history and English language and literature, an M.A. in history, archaeology and Mediterranean arts and an M.A. in cultural heritage management, obtained at universities in Croatia, France and Spain. She did traineeships at the European Commission and the *Cité de l'architecture et du patrimoine* in Paris. She has been working as a cultural project manager and as a freelancer guide and cultural mediator at *Kanal Centre Pompidou* in Brussels. She is the co-founder of the Culture Hub Croatia and currently the research coordinator at the social enterprise Edgeriders in Brussels/Belgium.

Farah Berger, born in southern Germany, studies in the M.A. programme of heritage conservation and art history at the University of Bamberg. In order to take an active part in the conservation of heritage sites and heritage objects, she has been participating in several European Heritage Volunteers Projects and European Heritage Training Courses. Above all, the practical work and the resulting protection and conservation of various kinds of heritage is essential and joyful for her.

John Björkman holds an M.A. in Nordic folklore and has worked most of his career with rural museums and open-air museums. He is currently working as team leader in cultural heritage at the Museum Centre of Turku. His job includes acting as an advisor for smaller museums in the region of southwest Finland. His main interests and specialities include living and immaterial heritage, vernacular architecture and cultural environments, as well as folk beliefs and customs. He has co-written several books about volunteer engagement, heritage education and the local heritage of southwest Finland.

Mojmír Choma from Slovakia is a skilled craftsman in masonry and carpentry and has an M.A. in archaeology, an M.A. in geology, and is obtaining a Ph.D. in civil engineering. Currently he works as dendro-chronologist. Since 2008, he is the head of the Tematín Castle Association. In his spare time, he volunteers in various projects focused on traditional wooden architecture, archaeological and architectural researches.

Kriledjan Çipa holds a B.A. in history and an M.Sc. in archaeology and cultural heritage and is a Ph.D. candidate in archaeology since 2013. He works as the head of the Archaeological Sites Department in the Regional Directorate of National Culture Vlora/Albania and Administrator of Archaeological Sites of Amantia-Orikum-Foinike and is responsible for the rescue excavations in the Vlora Region. He is author and co-author of several scientific articles in national and inter-national archaeological journals.

Albina Davletshina, born in an ethnic region of Bashkir and Tatar people near the Ural Mountains, studied architecture in Russia and urban planning and policy analysis in Italy. While living in the USA, she worked with buildings of landmark status and historic districts with strict zoning and building regulations. Currently, she is a teaching assistant at *Politecnico di Milano* in courses related to urban and rural planning, cultural landscape and built environment.

Jutta Dick, born in Essen/Germany, worked as a research assistant for the Old Synagogue Memorial in Essen and the Salomon-Steinheim-Institute for German and Jewish-German history at University Duisburg. Since 1995, she has been the director of the Foundation Moses Mendelssohn Academy Halberstadt with the Berend Lehmann Museum for Jewish history and culture and has been a board member since 2012. She has numerous publications on the history of Jewish women.

Tome Filov has a B.A. of Fine Arts with specialisation in conservation and restoration from the St. Cyril and Methodius University in Skopje/North Macedonia. From 2008 till 2019, he worked as scientific associate and project manager with numerous institutions for the protection of cultural heritage in North Macedonia and Bulgaria. Since 2011, he is a co-coordinator and lecturer in a summer school for conservation and restoration of mosaic and wall paintings and since 2019, employed as mosaic conservator in the National Institution for Management of the Archaeological Site of Stobi/North Macedonia.

Nadezhda Fomina, born in a small village in Arkhangelsk Region/Russia, graduated from the Institute of Natural Science and Technologies at Northern Arctic Federal University and has an M.A. in applied ecology from the *University Høgskolen i Innlandet* in Norway. Currently, she works in the Ecological Education Department of Kenozero National Park, which includes the responsibility for volunteer projects.



Ana Gašparović, born in Zagreb, holds a B.A. in international and European economic relations and an M.A. in Central and Eastern European studies. She is a licensed tour guide for Zagreb and Prague. Since 2009, she has been actively involved in the Friends of Heritage Association in Ivanić-Grad and has initiated and managed several projects within the association. Her focus is on industrial heritage and developing heritage experiences for children and youth.

Nadine Griesinger, born in the southwest of Germany, has a B.A. in interior architecture and is currently studying heritage conservation in Bamberg. Besides her freelance work at a building researcher's office and her own research on a castle in Middle Franconia, her main interests are documenting and conserving historic interior rooms, as well as understanding historic constructions in order to pursue a career in the field of building with existing fabric.

Sarah Hannon-Bland, raised in south England, graduated with an M.A. in managing archaeological sites. She works as a historic environment consultant in industrial archaeology in the Midlands/United Kingdom. She carries out heritage assessments, historic building surveys, and desk-based studies and volunteers at heritage sites in the United Kingdom and abroad. She is an associate member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

Friederike Hansell studied pre- and early history, classical archaeology and ethnology in Berlin and Munich and has an M.A. in World Heritage studies from the *Brandenburgische Technische Universität Cottbus*/Germany. She was responsible for the transboundary World Heritage nomination *Erzgebirge/Krušnohoří Mining Region*. In her role as focal point for World Heritage in Saxony, she advises the state of Saxony in all World Heritage issues. Key tasks include, among others, raising awareness for World Heritage among the public and strengthening the involvement of civil society in World Heritage processes.

Julia Heeb completed an M.A. in experimental archaeology and a Ph.D. Afterwards, she worked freelance, offering research and educational services for museums and translations of academic texts. In 2015, she began working for the *Stiftung Stadtmuseum Berlin* at the archaeological open-air museum *Museumsdorf Düppel* and the archaeological collections.

Serob Hunanyan, grown up in Aragatsotn region of Armenia, obtained a B.A. and an M.A. in history from Yerevan State University. After his studies he worked as research fellow and advisor of external relations at the Service for the Protection of Historical Environment and Cultural Museum-Reservations of the Republic of Armenia. Currently he is working as assistant to the minister at the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure of the Republic of Armenia.

Marlene Jabouille is a Portuguese architect and interior designer who initiated a nomadic journey to deepen her knowledge in the vernacular typologies of earth construction. In Iran, she participated in an earthen architecture conservation workshops, studied the local architecture and engaged with the nomadic tribes. In India she learned about bioclimatic and local architecture. Devoted to earthen construction, her purpose is to advocate for the importance of returning to ancestral forms of construction, linked to a contemporary representation of sensitive architecture.

Katharina Jesswein grew up in Germany and Slovakia and studied archaeometry and industrial archaeology at the *TU Bergakademie Freiberg* in Germany. Through research stays in Germany and Austria and her employment at the Technical Museum in Vienna, she gained practical insights into traditional handicraft techniques and how to mediate technology and natural science to young people. As a research associate at the Institute of the History of Economy and Technique at *TU Bergakademie Freiberg*, she develops workshops and projects for World Heritage education in the *Erzgebirge/Krušnohoří Mining Region*.

Rüdiger Kelm studied archaeology, geography, botany, public law and pedagogy in Kiel, Freiburg and Bremen/Germany and Lund/Sweden and holds a Ph.D. from the University of Kiel. He is specialised in Roman Iron Age archaeology, Viking Age archaeology, ceramic technology and analysis and landscape reconstruction, and pedagogic programs in archaeology. After working at *Historisches Museum Bremerhaven*, he has been employed as project leader at the *Archäologisch-Ökologisches Zentrum Albersdorf* since 1997 and became its director in 2007.

Karen Kiss, born in Budapest, completed her studies in anthropology, focusing on material and visual culture, which informed her interest in heritage. She is currently living and working in London as a researcher and archivist. She is particularly interested in the social role and background of objects and how people interact with museums and heritage sites. Her first in-depth introduction to heritage work was volunteering in projects within the European Heritage Volunteers Programme.

Anne Kleinbauer, born in Thuringia/Germany, studied art history, cultural history and theory, and historical urban studies in Berlin. She is currently living and working in the field of political-historical education in Zittau/Germany, where she hopes to host a European Heritage Volunteers Project one day.

Uwe Koch, born in Berlin, graduated from the Humboldt University in Berlin, where he obtained a Ph.D. in sociology. He has held various management positions for the Brandenburg Ministry for Science, Research and Culture since 1991. From 2002 to 2015, he headed the Department for Conservation, Commemorative Culture and Museums. In 2015, he was named coordinator of the German Cultural Heritage Committee. He was one of the initiators of the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 and the German coordinator for the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018.



Korab Kraja, raised in Kosovo and Montenegro, is a young architect who has focused his career on cultural heritage. He is committed to documenting built cultural heritage, historic urban landscapes and their rehabilitation. For this purpose, he participated in various activities related to the protection of architectural heritage. He has also published scientific articles in the journal *Dija* on the topic of cultural heritage.

Bert Ludwig, born in Germany, studied Eastern European studies and heritage studies in Germany and Czechia which he completed with a Ph.D. After his studies, he was employed at heritage administrations in Germany on local, regional and federal state levels. Later, he worked at various non-governmental organisations in the field of cultural heritage, intercultural education and civil society engagement in Germany and on a European level. For several years, he has combined all those experiences working as director of European Heritage Volunteers.

Mariana Martinho, born in Portugal, studied in Lisbon and Barcelona and obtained an M.A. in cultural economics and entrepreneurship in Rotterdam. Her academic background fostered a major interest in the field of cultural heritage. She has worked in different positions for European Heritage Volunteers, starting as a volunteer and continuing as group coordinator, project coordinator, and initiator of projects in Portugal. As a freelancer, she develops activities and projects related to heritage and environmental education with children.

Alina Mulyk, Ukrainian, earned an M.A. in fine art restoration at the Lviv National Academy of Fine Arts, Faculty of Fine Arts and Restoration. She has work experience as an artist-restorer for the Lviv Museum of the History of Religion and currently works as a teacher of specialised disciplines of the artistic cycle in Lviv College of Civil Engineering, Architecture and Design. Her area of interest is the conservation and restoration of easel and wall painting, as well as iconography.

Sorina Neacsu, born in Romania, is a trained art historian, cultural manager and museum educator and enjoys everything related to heritage. Her studies focused on art history and political science, but she also took various extracurricular courses such as curatorial practices, art critique, and museum education. Currently, she lives in Bucharest and manages the “Heritage for the Future” Cultural Association and is writing her Ph.D. thesis on contemporary art.

Paula O’Donohoe Villota, with Irish and Spanish roots, is a social and cultural anthropologist graduated from *Universidad Complutense de Madrid*, specialised in memory and heritage. Later on, she did an Erasmus Mundus M.A. on Euroculture at *Universidad de Deusto* in Spain with a semester at *Palackého Univerzita Olomouc* in Czechia, and a research semester at *Rijksuniversiteit Groningen* in the Netherlands. Currently, she is a Ph.D. candidate in the Sociology and Anthropology Programme in Madrid, working on the trans-generational transmission of memory in Spain.

Andreas Pahl, trained as a gardener and studied landscape management, has worked in several historic gardens in Berlin. After working freelance at the Berlin Monument Authority, he was the department manager at the Foundation for Prussian Castles and Gardens. Later he became park manager for the Fürst Pückler Museum Park and Castle Branitz in Cottbus/Germany. Since 2008, he has worked as a division manager and garden consultant for *Klassik Stiftung Weimar*.

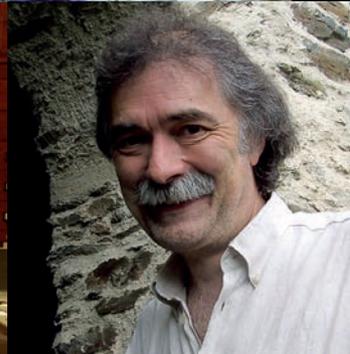
Petar Petrov, born in Bulgaria and living in Sofia, finished an M.A. in architecture and an M.A. in architecture theory and criticism at the University of Architecture, Civil Engineering and Geodesy in Sofia. He works as a conservation architect, specialised in the fields of archaeology and site management, and writes for a number of online and printed magazines on various heritage topics. He is also a licensed tour guide and is active as a volunteer guide for the European Heritage Days.

Sanja Platiša, born in Serbia, obtained a B.A. in architecture in Belgrade and an M.A. in architecture and conservation at *Politecnico di Milano*. She has been active in diverse heritage activities in Serbia and abroad and worked in an architecture office in Granada/Spain. In the future, she is planning to pursue a Ph.D. focusing on heritage participation.

Siim Raie was born in the industrial town of Kiviõli in Estonia. Growing up in a society going through a major transition inspired his interest in history and culture. He first studied business administration, followed by a career in the Estonian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. His growing interest in heritage led to a second degree in the field of heritage protection and conservation, with a focus on heritage theory and administration. Upon graduation, he worked as the director of the Office of the President of the Republic of Estonia, followed by his current position as the Director General of the National Heritage Board of Estonia.

Artur-Oliver Raupach grew up in the Ruhr region in Germany. After a dissatisfying commercial apprenticeship, he went to Switzerland, where he interned with a painter and made the decision to become a restorer. He began studying architecture and completed a master’s degree, followed by training as a certified restorer and a specialisation in the restoration of wall paintings. He became a freelance restorer for plaster, stucco and painting and holds seminars in the field of conservation and restoration of plaster and painting.

Leonel Ribeiro, born in Setúbal/Portugal, completed a vocational education as conservator-restorer with a specialisation in tiles at the *Instituto Português do Património Cultural*, obtained a degree in art history and completed specialisation courses in cultural heritage management. Since 1996, he’s coordinated the *Serviço de Azulejaria de Câmara Municipal de Lisboa*. As a freelancer he was responsible for various works of conservation and restoration of artistic heritage for individuals and renowned institutions.



Erica Sartori, born in Trieste/Italy, completed a B.A. in conservation and restoration of works of art specialising in the conservation of wooden polychrome sculptures. She is currently finishing her M.A. in the same field at the Academy of Fine Art and Design in Ljubljana/Slovenia. During her studies, she pursued a six-month internship at the Royal Institute for Cultural Heritage in Brussels/Belgium.

Constanze Schaaff grew up in rural Bavaria/Germany and holds a M.Sc. in geo-ecology and a postgraduate degree in international cooperation from the Centre for Advanced Training in Rural Development. She has been working in establishment and management of protected areas in Germany, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey, Lebanon, and Macedonia. Currently she lives in Korça/Albania, where she directs the KfW-financed project “Transboundary Biosphere Reserve Prespa” with the aim of both promoting the natural and cultural heritage of the Prespa National Park, thus supporting the socio-economic development of this marginalised region of Albania.

Siegfried Schmidt studied political science, economics and sociology in Tübingen/Germany and Gainesville/Florida. He holds an M.A. in political science of the University of Florida and obtained a diploma in journalism due to his postgraduate studies of mass communication and journalism at the University of Stuttgart-Hohenheim/Germany. He works for a newspaper in the district of Freudenstadt and is the chairman of the Freudenstadt Heritage Association.

Marc Schwan who grew up in the Ore Mountains and is a trained forester, worked as a managing director in the social sector and was responsible for numerous aid transports to Eastern Europe and Kosovo. As managing director of the *Markus-Röhling-Stolln* visitor mine, he specialises in mining work and mine technology, as well as in the roping up and down technique of high and deep rescue, a special group of the volunteer fire brigade.

Marta Sztwiertnia from Cieszyn in Silesia/Poland has lived and worked in Kraków for fifteen years. She has a degree in history of art from Jagiellonian University and completed a post-graduate course in cultural heritage management. Currently she manages the *ChroniC Dobro Foundation* responsible for the cultural and educational activities of the Benedictine Abbey in Tyniec which has been developing work with volunteers for several years.

Barirah Tahir was raised in one of the oldest cities in the Indian subcontinent, Lahore/Pakistan. She has a B.A. in architectural engineering and is currently completing her master’s in monumental heritage at Anhalt University of Applied Sciences Dessau/Germany. She plans to contribute to the field of cultural heritage by specialising in stone restoration and conservation.

Lindsay Taylor is a US-American studying social and cultural anthropology, literature, and art history in Berlin. Previously a video editor for the German news and media company *Deutsche Welle*, Lindsay now works for European Heritage Volunteers and part-time for the German Cultural Heritage Committee. In addition to her academic and professional career, Lindsay also writes articles for the European Heritage Times and book reviews for an independent bookstore in Berlin.

Peter Trescher, born in Mühlhausen/Germany, obtained a bricklayer degree and worked in the renovation of old buildings. Later he worked as a specialist craftsman for heritage conservation at *Klassik Stiftung Weimar*, gained a master’s degree in building construction, and became responsible for the maintenance of Weimar’s current World Heritage sites. He acquired the qualification as “Master in Handicraft” and has since been self-employed. He specialises in the use of traditional handcrafted technologies, with a particular focus on ecological and sustainable building. In 2016, he was awarded the German Federal Prize for “Crafts in Monument Conservation”.

Amilcar Vargas grew up in Mexico, where he studied accounting and archaeology. In Barcelona he completed M.A. in heritage management and M.A. in museology. He is a specialist on World Heritage management and has worked in renowned institutions as UNESCO, INAH and *Palau Güell*. Currently, he is a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Barcelona and responsible for the World Heritage of Casa Batlló in Barcelona, implementing the World Heritage Convention at this site.

Frederico Vaz, born in Abrantes/Portugal, studied conservation and restoration at the Polytechnic Institute of Tomar. Afterwards, he completed internships at the CRRCOA in Vesoul/France and at the *Musée du Dialogue at Université Catholique de Louvain* in Belgium. Later, he worked on the conservation and restoration of the façades of important monuments in Portugal. In 2005, he joined the *Divisão de Salvaguarda de Património Cultural de Câmara Municipal de Lisboa*, where he works as superior technician.

Gerhard Wagner, born in Siegen/Germany, studied German and history at the University of Marburg. Though he originally intended to become a teacher, he ended up managing a cultural centre for sixteen years. Afterwards he became the managing director of the German Castles Association, a position he’s held now for almost two decades. Since the association is based on Marksburg Castle, he takes care of the conservation as well as specific conservation issues concerning this monument.

Rineldi Xhelilaj graduated from the Polytechnic University of Tirana/Albania with a degree in architecture, was awarded an M.A. in disaster risk management at Epoka University/Albania and has attended various training courses in the field of heritage. He currently works as head of the Architecture, Archaeology and Cultural Heritage Management Department at the Regional Directorate of National Culture Vlora. His main tasks include the design and supervision of tangible cultural heritage restoration projects of in the region.

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