

# Landesmuseum Kärnten – the Collections of Natural Sciences

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Stumfohl, R. Landesmuseum Kärnten – the Collections of Natural Sciences. In: Winkler Prins, C.F. & Donovan, S.K. (eds.), *VII International Symposium 'Cultural Heritage in Geosciences, Mining and Metallurgy: Libraries - Archives - Museums': "Museums and their collections"*, Leiden (The Netherlands), 19-23 May 2003. *Scripta Geologica Special Issue*, 4: 261-266, 3 figs.; Leiden, August 2004.

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Key words — Carinthia, Collections of Natural Sciences, 'Naturwissenschaftlicher Verein für Kärnten', 'Landesmuseum Kärnten'.

Public museums collections had a hard start in Carinthia: only in 1848 did the first Museum of Natural Sciences open, maintained by the 'Naturhistorischer Verein für Kärnten'. For a long time the collections were based on private donations. In 1884, the 'Naturhistorischer Verein' and the 'Geschichtsverein für Kärnten' moved into a new museum building, since 1898 there have been full-time curators. The museum's scientific publication was and still is the periodical *Carinthia*. In 1942, the collections became property of the Government, but since 1998 they have been privatized.

## Contents

Introduction .....	261
Museum of Natural History at Klagenfurt .....	262
Landesmuseum Kärnten .....	265
Acknowledgements .....	265
References .....	265

## Introduction

At the time of Enlightenment there arose in Carinthia an interest in reappraising natural history and the historical past. Many private collectors tried hard to open their collections to the public. One such collection for example was owned by Archiduchess Maria Anna, daughter of Maria Theresia, who had her residence at Klagenfurt. Her Major domo, Joseph Count Enzenberg, also collected minerals, plants, conchilias and butterflies, and when Maria Anna died he inherited her collection; now he owned about 3000 pieces. Unfortunately, Enzenberg had a lot of debts and was forced to sell the collection for about 6000 florins, a lot of money in those days. We do not know who bought it (Klemun, 1998, p. 24).

Two other collectors, who lived for a short time in Carinthia, were Franz Xaver Wulfen and Sigismund von Hohenwart, who both were interested in scientific materials (von Jabornegg, 1898, p. 4). When Vicar von Hohenwart went to Linz and became bishop, he let his friend Franz Count Egger have his collection. The latter put it at the third floor of the Palais Linderhain at Klagenfurt, where it was open to the public. Count Egger worked closely with Archiduke Johann of Austria, who persuaded him in 1811 to give the greater part to the newly founded 'Museum Joanneum' at Graz. The remaining part of the collection went to the Lyceum at Klagenfurt in 1815. Teachers at that institution were very interested in natural sciences. For instance Mathias

Achazel started at his private home meteorological observations and had a little botanical garden (Klemun, 1998, p. 41).

### Museum of Natural History at Klagenfurt

At the Lyceum there was a lack of place for exhibiting the collections, and so rose the first plans for a Museum of Natural History. In 1846, at a session of the 'Geschichtsverein' (Historical society), the zoologist Meinrad von Gallenstein (Fig. 1), abbot at St. Paul (a Benedictinian monastery in Carinthia), made an application for the establishment of a Museum of Natural Sciences. Within the Agricultural Society a committee was established which invited the population to contribute money or to donate collections. Chairman of the committee was the industrialist Paul von Herbert (von Jabornegg, 1898, p. 4). At first the donations were modest, but in 1848 the industrial Count Gustaf Egger let the committee have his collection of minerals and birds on the conditions that they make it open to the public and never move it out of Carinthia (Anonymous, 1848, p. 25). Baron Paul von Herbert presented his geognostical collection and minerals on the same conditions. When the committee found a suitable house, it engaged the curator Heinrich Freyer from Ljubljana to make the donation ready for transport from St. Georgen am Sandhof to Klagenfurt (von Jabornegg, 1898, p. 7). The committee petitioned the subscribers do make donations for the library, which would form one of the most important parts of the museum. One year later the material was ordered so far that on October 10th, 1848, a first guided tour for the committee was

arranged (Heinrich, 1853, p. 9). This date marks the establishment of the 'Naturwissenschaftlicher Verein für Kärnten' (Society for Natural Sciences Carinthia) (Lex, 1928, p. 1). The Society maintained the museum for many years. The stated purpose of the objects in the museum collection was to show the necessary material for the studies of natural sciences, to make natural sciences popular and to fulfill scientific research. From 1849 the museum was open to the public each Sunday from 9 to 13, and for students also on Thursday. On Thursdays there were public lectures on geology, in the morning for students and in the afternoon for "Friends of natural sciences." On Sundays there were public lectures for manual workers (Anonymous, 1849, p. 22). To educate the public, the museum had correspondents all over the country and, from 1854, sent minerals, plants, etc. to schools (von Jabornegg, 1898, p. 15).



Fig. 1. Portrait of Meinrad von Gallenstein (Original: Landesmuseum Kärnten).

The museum was financed by the donations and contributions of the members. The first curator was Friedrich Simony, who was the first to sound the depth of the Wörthersee (Simony, 1850, p. 114). He did not stay long and was succeeded by Josef Leodegar Canaval, secretary of the chamber. He edited the publications of the museum and wrote, together with his father-in-law, Franz von Rosthorn, the first scientific mineralogy of Carinthia (Canaval & von Rosthorn, 1853). Franz von Rosthorn, industrialist, worked out the first geognostical profile of Carinthia in 1831 (Canaval, 1851, p. 29). In 1861 the 'Naturwissenschaftlicher Verein' and the 'Geschichtsverein' moved with their collections into the 'Landhaus,' the most important representative building of Carinthia. The collections grew larger: the botanist Kokeil donated his collection, Friedrich Münichsdorfer, the administrator of the mine at Hüttenberg, sent a lot of minerals to the museum, and the pharmacist Alois Traunfellner donated his Herbarium (Simony, 1850, p. 114), as did the botanist David Pacher, who published the unique work about the Flora of Carinthia (Pacher, 1880-1888). The two herbars, together with the collections of Markus Jabornegg-Gamsenegg and Gustav Adolf Zwanziger, form the basis of the 'Kärntner Landesherbar.' At the centre of Klagenfurt the Society obtained an area for setting up a botanical garden under the direction of Leopold von Hueber and von Jabornegg (von Jabornegg, 1898, p. 20). From 1866 it was open to the public three days a week (Lex, 1928, p. 2).

To maintain the collections more efficiently several professional groups were formed. Over the winter professionals gave popular lectures, segregated for males and females. Every week there was an informal meeting of professionals at the so-called "round table."

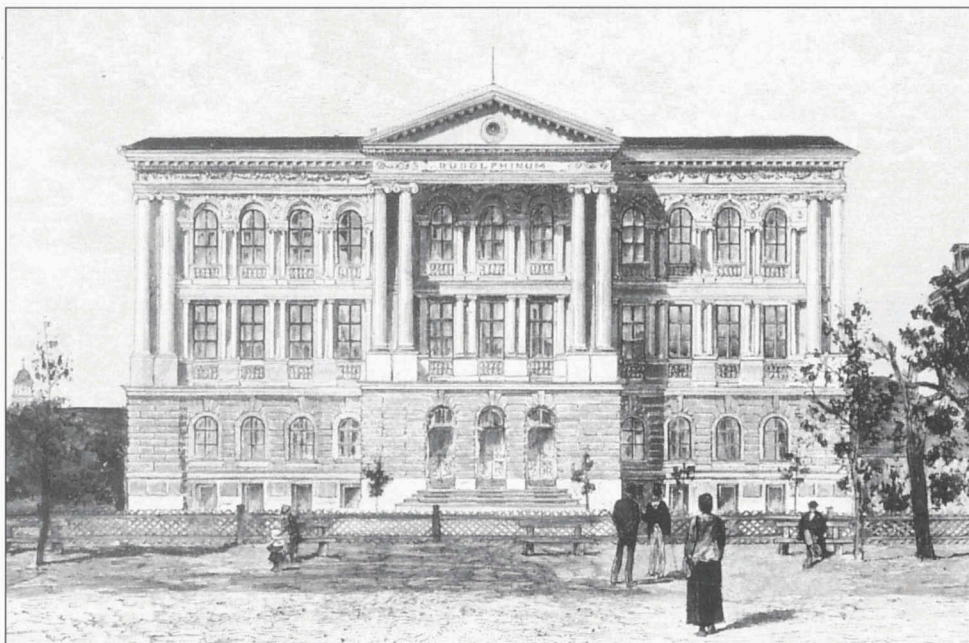


Fig. 2. The Landesmuseum für Kärnten 'Rudolfinum' in Klagenfurt, seen from the south (print, 1885).

In 1872, the independent 'Verein Naturhistorisches Landesmuseum' (Society Museum for Natural History) was established and there was no longer an official connection with the Agricultural Society (von Jabornegg, 1898, p. 24). As the 'Landhaus' was not big enough for the collections, the chairman, Ferdinand Seeland – who looked after the meteorological station at Klagenfurt, sounded the Wörthersee and measured the Pasterze at Großglockner – together with the 'Geschichtsverein' and the 'Kärntner Gewerbehalle' planned a new building. In 1879, there was the ceremonial laying of the foundation stone and in 1884, the festive opening of the new museum (Fig. 2), built by Gustav Gugitz and sponsored by the 'Kärntner Sparkasse.' Since 1898 there were full-time curators; Hans Sabidussi for botany, Karl Frauscher for zoology and August Brunlechner for geology. Brunlechner (1884) wrote a new Geological Survey of Carinthia and was President of the Montanistic Society at Klagenfurt and specialist in montanistics (von Jabornegg, 1898, p. 45).

From the beginning, the library of the society was of special importance to the members. A large donation was the library of Count Goess, dedicated in 1850 (Canaval, 1851, p. 30), with about 1000 books, now in the University Library Klagenfurt. Also the 'Geologische Reichsanstalt' (Vienna) sent her yearbook to the museum. In 1872, the part-time curator Gustav Adolf Zwanziger (Klemun, 1993, p. 316) catalogued the books and took an inventory of the stock. His successor was Wenzel Hofbauer (Lex, 1928, p.15). Many periodicals came in exchange for the scientific publications of the members of the Society. The scientific journal first published for the



Fig. 3. Glocknerpanorama (Original: Landesmuseum Kärnten).

'Geschichtsverein' and the 'Naturwissenschaftlicher Verein,' then for the museum, was the *Carinthia* established in 1811 by Carl Mercy, and is the third-oldest scientific magazine in German which has been published without a break. From 1863 the two societies edited the periodical together (von Jabornegg, 1898, p. 21). Since 1891 it is divided into *Carinthia I* (*Geschichtsverein*) and *Carinthia II* (*Naturwissenschaftlicher Verein*). The 'Naturwissenschaftlicher Verein' published from 1852 to 1918 the *Jahrbuch des Naturhistorischen Museums*. Another important series was, and still is, the *Special Magazines of Carinthia II*.

In 1923 a new collection came to the museum, that of the Alpine Museum, which no longer had a place for the reliefs of Paul Oberlerecher. His 'Glocknerrelief' (Fig. 3) is one of the most interesting objects in natural sciences that is owned by the Landesmuseum Kärnten (Lex, 1928, p. 3). When in 1925 the Carinthian Museum of Local History was founded, these collections were moved into the museum building.

### Landesmuseum Kärnten

In 1942 the collections of all three societies became property of the 'Reichsgau Kärnten' and so the government for the first time had to administer the museum. After the Second World War the collections remained in the ownership of the State of Carinthia; the government rebuilt the destroyed building and employed full-time curators (Anonymous, 1987, p. 10). In 1958, the botanical garden, almost 100 years old, had to move to the Kreuzbergl quarry, managed by Franz Kahler, Erwin Aichinger, Felix Widder and Fritz Turnowsky (Müller, 1971, p. 352). At the tunnel of Kreuzbergl since 1973 there is the Montanistic Museum. In 1974, the 'Geschichtsverein' and the 'Naturwissenschaftlicher Verein' made a contract with the government and sealed the moving of the collections and libraries into public property (Anonymous, 1987, p. 10). In 1998 the museum was privatized and started a new publication, *Rudolfinum, year-book of the State Museum of Carinthia*. The two scientific societies, which contributed so much to it, still have their offices in the building, and work closely together with the curators and the library.

### Acknowledgements

The author of all figures is U.P. Schwarz, Landesmuseum Kärnten.

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