

# HORSES & HERITAGE

## Activities 2016

My contract at the Brandenburg State Stud Neustadt (Dosse) ended at the end of March. Now, I had more time and summer with lots of events was knocking at the door.

As in 2015, the Czech National Stud Kladruby nad Labem engaged me as English speaker of the international driving competition which took place late in April. From there I went directly to Bad Muskau, the World Heritage park at the German/Polish border, where I gave a presentation at a symposium of garden historians. The following weekend was spent at the international four-day-event of Marbach State Stud in the south of Germany, which has been my home from 2009 to 2015.

In May the International Wiesbaden Horse Show “PfungstTurnier” celebrated its 80 jubilee. I’m involved in the organisation since 25 years and everyone behind the scenes was very excited. Everything was supposed to be bigger and better than ever before. After a massive thunderstorm on the first day the party mood dropped and after four days we were all happy to have mastered the event with a blue eye.



Orga-action at Wiesbaden • the stars of the scene on their way to Rio • with Michael Jung before his special honouring

During the summer months I had the impression that my knowledge of European stud culture is asked for and therefore, I decided to revitalise my self-employment, to call it “Horses & Heritage” and to set up a website [www.horses-and-heritage.net](http://www.horses-and-heritage.net). Under the first clients are the Wiesbadener Reit- und Fahr- Club (Wiesbaden Riding and Driving Club, organiser of the PfungstTurnier), the Czech State Studs, the leading Suisse equestrian magazine Kavallo and the Free University of Berlin, where I am active as visiting lecturer.

In parallel travelling continued, since old contacts want to be maintained and new ones to be established. At the end of May the *Day of the Oldkladruby* Horse took place at Kladruby nad Labem. It was a splendid day in the central courtyard of the freshly renovated stud with everything that makes the horses of Kladruby so special and even with guest from Denmark. The queen had sent the golden gala carriage of the Danish court with six horses that had been bred at Kladruby together with employees in the uniforms of the royal stables. I felt very privileged to be present at this extraordinary occasion. Another highlight of the show was the “hot wheels” pas-de-deux of the two

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world class drivers Jiří und Radek Nesvačil for the first time driven with two six-in-hands. There is only a small line between genius and insanity.



Style, sport and show at the Day of the Oldkladruby Horse at the Czech National Stud

On the following day I joined my Czech friend Lenka Gotthardová to the *Ride of the Kings* at Vlčnov in Moravian Slovakia. The event with horses richly decorated with paper flowers in the centre of attention, is a centuries old tradition and listed as Intangible Heritage. On the following weekend my treasures of Kladruby competed successfully at the Slovakian National Stud Topol'čianky. On the way I managed to spend a day at Bratislava, which is absolutely worth visiting!



In June an international driving event took place at Debkau in the east of Germany, where I gave my debut as groom of Radek Nesvačil with the black team of Kladruby. Debkau is not far from Cottbus and I used the opportunity to visit friends in my university town. From Cottbus I went to Kladruby, where the *Large Riders' Day* takes place every year on the last Saturday of June.



As groom with Radek at Debkau • Large Riders' Day at Kladruby • Horse whispering with young black Kladruber mares

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At the beginning of July we started our summer tour through the south of Poland and spent ten extraordinary days inspecting towns, monasteries, palaces, gardens and traditional timber architecture. The biggest challenge was to make a choice – there is an awful lot to see!



Vernacular timber architecture



Impressive parks and palaces in Lancut and in Krasieczyn



Krakow / Karakau



Hirschberg valley garden landscape



Wroclaw/Beslau

For me the journey to Poland ended in the Bavarian World Heritage city of Bamberg, where I gave a presentation at the international conference of animal historians “*Humans and animals between medieval times and modernity*”. On the next weekend I couldn’t resist to spontaneously drive to the CHIO Aachen, the most prestigious horse sport event apart from championships. On the last weekend of July I was once again busy in the uniform of Kladruby National Stud as groom at the Czech nation cup driving event at Nebanice.

In August the excursion of the Wiesbaden Riding- and Driving Club took place, which I plan and guide since a few years. The tour led us to the German State Studs at Neustadt (Dosse) and Redefin with further stops at interesting heritage sites of Brandenburg and Mecklenburg-Pomerania.



The next longer journey was planned for September. The international driving elite gathered at Breda in the Netherlands for the World Championships in four-in-hand driving. My Kladruby stars were very brave, the German team was pushed from rank two to three by the Hungarians, the drivers of the

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Netherlands celebrated their expected victory as did the Australian champion Boyd Exell in the single class. Besides the sports I had some time to see a little bit of the country including its most famous windmills.

After the World Championships I spent a wonderful holiday week with Radek Nesvačil, his family and the horses at Redefin State Stud. On the following weekend we participated in the Stallion Parades of Neustadt (Dosse) and Redefin, which I had arranged at the beginning of the year when I was working for Neustadt. The performances went like clockwork and earned enthusiastic applause on both parades.



Once more I continued to Kladruby, because for the next weekend I had planned a visit of 40 horse breeders from southern Germany. The guests were hooked and directly commissioned me again for 2017.

The last weekend of September was dedicated to the Czech Driving Championships, which took place at Hermanův Městec, where Radek Nesvačil with the driving department of the black horses of the national stud are based in the former hunting stables of the noble Kinsky family. The attached park with the remains of the historic race course was a beautiful backdrop for the carriages. Naturally, the four-in-hand class was dominated by the Nesvačil family. In the end Jiří jr. succeeded, in front of his father Jiří sen. and his younger brother Radek who managed the balancing act between organising and competing.

My mother had joined me in the Czech Republic and for her birthdays we spent some nice days in the Bohemian Spa Triangle. In difference to my hometown Wiesbaden, which sadly stepped back from the serial World Heritage nomination "*The Great Spas of Europe*" this year, traditional spa business is still practiced at Karlovy Vary, Mariánské Lázně and Františkovy Lázně.



Between nostalgia and wellness: Karlovy Vary, Mariánské Lázně and Františkovy Lázně

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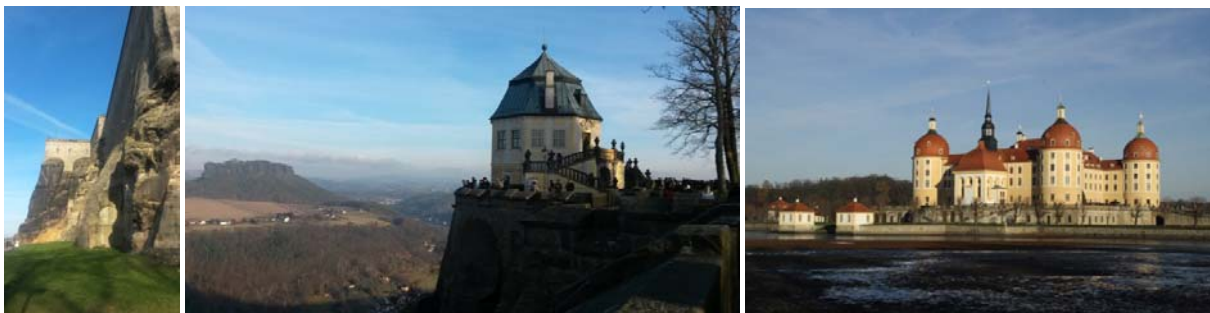
In November I was invited to give a presentation at the annual meeting of the expert group for driving of the German Riding and Driving Association. The event took place in Wiehl where businessmen and traditional driver Siegward Tesch has established one of the most significant private collections of driving culture including historic carriages, harnesses, driving equipment, pieces of fine art and a library. Sensational! My presentation was very well received and some very good contacts arose from the meeting. On the festive dinner I was awarded the *golden hoof nail for frequent, selfless commitment for the welfare of the horse* by the renowned veterinarian Dr. Helmut Ende.



Stunning: Collection Tesch at Wiehl, Germany

Once in conference mood I drove to the conservation fair at Leipzig in November, where a UNESCO symposium with focus on heritage interpretation took place. It felt great to discuss on professional level and to exchange experience with colleagues. From Leipzig I even managed to visit the sentimental park of Machern, the former home of the Lindenau family and designed by the architect of Neustadt (Dosse), the Saxonian master builder Glasewald.

Very enjoyable was also a trip to Cottbus at the beginning of December. I spent a wonderful sunny Saturday on Königstein fortress high above the river Elbe close to Dresden and on third advent I visited the Saxonian State Stud Moritzburg to see the Christmas show of the stallions.



Beautiful December days on Königstein fortress and at Moritzburg State Stud in Saxony

From Moritzburg I went to Kladruby for the last time in this year for some calm winter days and from there I continued to Munich to participate in a symposium of the historic college titled "Animals at

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court". I especially enjoyed the final day at Nymphenburg park and palace with the newly designed carriage museum.



Culture temples at the Munich Kings' Square and Nymphenburg palace with the carriage museum

At the end of the year Horses & Heritage has taken up speed. At present two publications, three presentations and three excursions are in preparation for next year. Planning has also started for the International Wiesbaden Horse Show and different activities with the Czech National Stud Kladruby nad Labem.



In life hope is driving six-in-hand, wishes four-in-hand, expectations with a pair and reality single.  
Fear is walking.

I love driving eight-in-hand. For pleasure!

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