Magiczny Kraków

The “Fort Jugowice. The heritage of the place” Exhibition

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Since 6 July, the Museum and Centre of the Scouting Movement at 28 Forteczna Street has been displaying an exhibition dedicated to the history and traditions of the southern areas of Krakow, as well as the Fortress of Krakow: its origins, architecture and the soldiers who inhabited it years ago. The “Fort Jugowice. The heritage of the place” exhibition is a permanent exhibition of the newest branch of the Museum of Krakow.

There used to be human settlements here, the names of which, after their incorporation into Krakow, remained, along with social memories. Hidden among the hills are traces of the past concerning this area – mining heaps and buildings left over from the largest sulphur mine in this part of Europe, a spa benefiting from sulphurous healing waters, numerous manor houses, picturesque churches and chapels, as well as forts and other fortifications created by the Austrians as part of the Krakow Fortress. The “Fort Jugowice. The heritage of the place” exhibition is in one of those forts, under number 52a and called “Jugowice”.

The exhibition is dedicated to the history and traditions of the southern areas of Krakow, as well as the Krakow Fortress, the history of its establishment, its architecture and its inhabitants – Austro-Hungarian soldiers. The exhibition tells the story of daily and festive life, peace and war, all in interiors that witnessed history.

The tour of the fort begins with a walk along a wide corridor where there used to be an earthen mound protecting the fort’s monolith from the front, overhanging the direction from which a potential enemy could come. Along the way, usually covered with dirt, is a concrete wall “exposed” along with the fort’s visible drainage system. At the entrance to the exhibition, a fragment of a stone detonation mantle was reproduced on the “exposed” wall, which – laid in the earthen rampart – was supposed to have been caused by an explosion of shells fired at the fort from a distance.

After entering the fort the tour takes a left, where in the former dressing room there is a model of the “Jugowice” fort along with information about its construction and history. The tour then returns to the entrance and leads to a large hall that was originally one of the living quarters for soldiers – the fort’s crew. This room presents the history of Krakow Fortress, as well as the history of the garrison of Krakow, along with information about the tourist route of the “southern ring of Krakow Fortress” linking forts and other fortress heritage sites located on the southern bank of the Vistula River. It is also used to present the participation of Krakow Fortress and soldiers associated with Krakow in World War I.

The tour then moves along winding, narrow corridors, passing the commandant’s room, the latrine and the ammunition lift, before leading to the western combat block. In the artillery emergency room, located between the wells of the two armoured towers, visitors can learn about the fortress artillery in its historical development, especially in the heyday of the “Jugowice” fort. In the next room, which used to serve as living quarters for soldiers, there is a discussion panel dedicated to the civilian heritage of the area around the “Jugowice” fort. It showcases the history and present day of the area of today’s District X Swoszowice: the history of the settlements that existed in this area before its

incorporation into Krakow, as well as their present day, already within the city limits. Further information is presented about the sulphur heritage associated with the mining of native sulphur that took place in Swoszowice for centuries, as well as the therapeutic effects of the sulphur waters.

The exhibition then returns to the military theme: it leads along another corridor to the eastern combat block, which is flanked on both sides by the former ammunition storerooms, even today much cooler and more humid than the rest of the fort.

In the room dedicated to the civilian heritage of the site, there is a memory depository, a place where, just like in the Podgórze Museum, people in possession of material about the history and heritage of District X will be able to share their knowledge and memories with others. For the memory depositories, there is a display case for temporarily depositing artefacts related to history and heritage. In addition, next to the display case, there is a magnetic board for hanging copies of photographs documenting the past or written memories.

The aim of the exhibition is to expose as accurately as possible the most important exhibit, the fort itself, hence the completed project tries to conceal the original walls and the remaining elements of the fort's equipment as little as possible. In chosen rooms, parallel to the narrative about the fort, the fortress and its civilian surroundings, dedicated charts are displayed presenting information about the original functions of the halls and corridors, supplemented by a visualisation of their appearance in the early 20th century.

A separate story is told on a tour path designed for the youngest visitors to the exhibition, who can explore the nooks and crannies of the fortress guided by Jack the Cat. Educational stands are available for older children, where they can learn how the inhabitants defended their cities, as well as about the history of the Krakow Fortress and the sulphur heritage of Swoszowice.

Additional information is available on the **Krakow Museum website**.