

Jimramov's Hall of Fame

The beginning of the exhibition is about the history of the little town of **Jimramov**. Jimramov was founded in the mid-13th century by the lords of Pernštejn, who colonised the area situated next to the lower affluent of the river Svratka, to the north of their residential castles, Pernštejn and Zubštejn. At that time, the Czech king Přemysl Otakar II had designated the Svratka as the border of the land. This constrained the development of Jimramov to only the right bank of the river.

The settlement started near to the confluence of the Svratka and the Fryšávka. In the Middle-Ages, its centre was in the neighbourhood of the actual castle. Since 1991, a zone of some 120 original houses has been classified historical. The more important houses are carrying designations as historical monuments.

The first document mentioning Jimramov dates from 1361. In the 16th century, the village of Jimramov expanded to include the three surrounding hills, Padělek, Holý Vrch and Prosička. These three hills are emblazoned in the arms of the town. 1537 is considered the year that Jimramov became a town rather than just a village. Throughout the centuries, the domain of Jimramov had many owners. The last one has been the noble Belcredi family, to whom the State has made restitution of the domain in 1991.

The Mayor's Right, symbolized by the object hanging near the door, has been gained by the town in the 16th century. A person touched by the mayor with it was arrested and put in jail. The nails driven inside supposedly indicate the number of people convicted and executed in this little town. On the floor are the chains with which the prisoners were put in irons. The jail used to be on the ground level, at the back of the town hall.

The second part of the exhibition is dedicated to a native of Jimramov, Father **Karel Slaviček** (1678-1735). A theologian, he undertook a mission to China. His journey by boat is drawn on the map. In China, he worked during almost 20 years as mathematician, astronomer and musician at the imperial court in Peking. He is buried there. The photographs of his grave have been taken in the 90's by the director of Prague's Institution of the Orientals Studies, Mr. Josef Kolmaš.

In his time, Slavíček was a well-known scholar who corresponded in Latin with his contemporaries. His letters titled *Letters from China*, translated by J. Vraštil, have been published in 1935 and again by J. Kolmaš in 1995.

His home, "*The House in the Sun*", bears a commemorative tablet.

The third part of the exhibition is about the **Mrštík** brothers. They were born in the 19th century in the house near the confluence of the Svratka and the Fryšávka. They only lived in Jimramov during their early childhood as the family moved later to Ostrovačice u Brna.

A commemorative tablet near their childhood home was inaugurated in 1927.

Alois (1861-1925), a teacher and a writer, has written, together with Vilém, the drama *Maryša* and the novel *A year in the Village*.

Vilém (1863-1912), was a writer (the novels *Santa Lucia* and *A Story of May*) and a translator.

František (1865-1905), was a pharmacist.

Norbert (1867-1905), was a medicine and a translator.

The picture at the far end shows Jimramov around 1750. It is considered a faithful representation of the town in the mid-18th century. It is the property of the Belcredi family.

The last part of the exhibition is about the protestant priest **Jan Karafiát** (1846-1929). The furniture you see here comes from his home. Karafiát devoted himself to a literary activity with religious themes. He wrote his memoirs in 5 volumes. His book *Little Beatles*, written in 1876, is very well known. It was one of the first Czech artistic books for children. The book has since been published in almost 100 editions in different languages and has been illustrated by the best Czech artists.

The diorama **The Marriage of Verunka**, made in 1939 by Jiří Trnka for an exhibition in New York, is the jewel of this exhibition. It was also used to show the Czechoslovak creative spirit at the 1959 Exposition in Brussels.

