

## **P R E S S R E L E A S E**

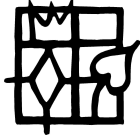
### **Happy ending for the black swan of Queen Victoria in Rosenau Park – The success story of an unusual lonely hearts advertisement**

In the beginning of August the Bavarian Department of State-owned Palaces, Gardens and Lakes published a rather unusual lonely hearts advertisement to look for a partner for the black swan in Rosenau Park. Within less than a week, a new partner was found. The animal was picked up at a breeder in Ingolstadt, a city about 200 km away from Rosenau Castle. The two had a promising first meeting, and have been getting along very well ever since.

Black swans play a special part in the history of Rosenau Castle and Park: it is believed that it was Queen Victoria of Great Britain (1819-1901) who brought the swans there as a sign of her grief after the death of her husband, Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha (1819-1861), whose family owned the property.

Especially with the sad story of Queen Victoria in mind – she never stopped mourning the early death of her beloved husband – the black swan should not have to suffer a similar fate. So Steffen Schubert, the head of the garden department and his team at Rosenau Palace and Park had been searching for a black swan since the disappearance of one of the two animals in May. “It is most likely that the animal was killed by a fox or another predator, since shortly after the disappearance bones and feathers were found by gardeners in the bushes of the park,” says Schubert.

Both the public and the press took great interest in the story. “We were really overwhelmed by the press inquiries from all over Germany and beyond and want to sincerely thank everyone who supported our search,” says Christoph Schäftlein, the deputy head of the garden department.



The new swan is only 9 months old. This means that it is still uncertain, whether the animal is male or female, because the gender of a swan can only be identified after the age of 3 years. But what is most important in the end is that the two get along well. And when you see them peacefully swimming on the lake alongside each other, one really hopes for a happy ending for the two of them.

They will definitely have a good home in Rosenau Park: the Swan Pond is about 4.9 acres big and in July employees of the garden department finished building a new small house for the swans which was modelled after a historical design. In winter, the animals have their own winter quarter with access to water and they are fed every day.

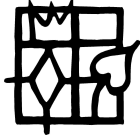
### Rosenau Palace and Park

Rosenau Palace is picturesquely **located in the middle of a landscape garden** on a hill above the little River Itz in Rödeta, only a few kilometres northeast of Coburg. It is an outstanding **early example of romantic Historicism in Bavaria**.

Duke Franz Friedrich Anton of Sachsen-Coburg-Saalfeld (r. 1800-1806) was persuaded in 1805 by Crown Prince Ernst to acquire the still fundamentally medieval seat of the Lords of Rosenau. In 1808, soon after taking power, Ernst ordered the ruined building to be remodelled in the Neo-Gothic style.

He wanted to create for himself a summer seat with particular emphasis on the building's medieval origins, in accordance with the romantic ideals of his time. The first ideas for the pointed-arch architecture and tracery ornamentation were provided by the young Berlin architect Karl Friedrich Schinkel. The completion of Rosenau Palace was celebrated in the year 1817 on the occasion of the marriage of Ernst I and Luise von Sachsen-Gotha-Altenburg with a tournament in old German costume on the meadows in front of the palace and a fancy-dress ball in the Marble Hall. It was in this hall that the second-eldest son of the ducal couple, Albert, was christened in 1819.

In 1845 Prince Albert (1819-1861) visited Rosenau together with his wife, **Queen Victoria of Great Britain** (1819-1901). In her memoirs, the queen says, *“If I were not who I am, this would be my real home.”* Watercolours with views of the interior of



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Rosenau Palace were commissioned from various artists as souvenirs of this visit, and are still kept in the **Royal Library in Windsor**.

From 1808, at the same time as the palace was being rebuilt, Duke Ernst I (r. 1806-1844) started laying out a **landscape park** with numerous romantic elements popularized by the English. The pronounced natural contours of the land provide scenic variety, and there are many attractive views of the Itz valley from different parts of the park. Particular importance was attached to the forming of an inconspicuous transition between the landscaped area and the surrounding countryside.

The centre of the park itself is occupied by a spacious meadow valley with a lake at one end, known as the **Swan Pond**. Some of the original park architecture has been preserved. Originally covering an area of 200 hectares, in addition to kitchen gardens and an arboretum the park had a pheasantry, a sheep farm and a dairy. The present park covers an area of 36 hectares.

Rosenau Palace is open from April until 3 October from 9am to 6pm and from 3 October to March from 10am to 4pm. It is closed on Mondays. The regular admission charge is 4.50 euros; the reduced one is 3.50 euros. Children and adolescents under 18 are admitted free of charge in the palaces, fortresses and museums of the Bavarian Palace Department. The park is freely accessible.

Kind regards,

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