

## The key people involved in the restoration of the château du Haut-Koenigsbourg



There were 3 key people involved in the restoration of the château du Haut-Koenigsbourg: the German Kaiser, Wilhelm II, architect Bodo Ebhardt and the artist Leo Schnug.

### Wilhelm II (1859-1941)

**Wilhelm II (Friedrich Wilhelm Viktor Albrecht von Hohenzollern)**, born January 27<sup>th</sup> 1859, was the last German Kaiser and the last King of Prussia. He reigned from 1888 to 1918.

His time in power was marked by the industrial revolution and an increasingly militaristic stance.

In his desire to be a modern leader at the head of a dynamic country, he dismissed his Chancellor Bismarck in 1890 and launched a programme of economic and social measures that transformed Germany into a great industrial power.

He did not renew the German-Russian mutual aid pact (an agreement guaranteeing the two countries' neutrality in set circumstances), instead embarking on an aggressive foreign policy that quickly led to disagreements with the United Kingdom and France. He improved relations with Austria and Italy and

launched a huge programme of re-armament. In 1914, he brought his country into the First World War. He abdicated on November 9<sup>th</sup> 1918 and went to live in the Netherlands, where he died in 1941.

- Wall paintings for the Maison Kammerzell and the former pharmacy, the pharmacie du Cerf in Strasbourg
- The painting, "Der von Tierstein" in Lampertheim town hall

He also produced the following works:

His first involvement with the château dated from 1908, when he drew up sketches of costume designs for the parade organized for the unveiling of the castle. In the years up to 1914 he completed the main wall paintings to be found in the castle, including the famous Emperor's banqueting hall and the trophy room.

**Leo Schnug was an illustrator and painter** born in Strasbourg in 1878. Alcohol abuse and loneliness marked his life and he died at Brumath-Stephansfeld psychiatric hospital on December 15<sup>th</sup> 1933. He is buried in Lampertheim cemetery in the Département of the Bas-Rhin, where his gravestone can still be seen today.

## Leo Schnug (1878-1933)

The project to **restore Haut-Koenigsbourg** involved many travels abroad, where he drew inspiration from other fortresses. Moreover, he frequently managed several projects at the same time, earning himself the nickname of 'rasender Bodo' (busy Bodo!)

His love of the Middle Ages and his enthusiasm for castle restoration made a good impression on Wilhelm II, who regularly visited him in his Berlin studio.

He edited *Der Burgwart*, a magazine about castles, which promoted the conservation and above all, the restoration of medieval castles. He was much criticized for this by those opposed to the restoration of castles.

He loved castles and in 1899 published *Deutsche Burgen*, a book in which he suggested that ruined castles should be rebuilt. In the same year he founded the German Castles Association (*Deutschen Burgenvereinigung*) in the Marksburg castle at Braubach in Germany.

After having studied cabinet-making at the Berlin school of decorative arts, he became an **architect**.

Born on January 5<sup>th</sup> 1865 in Bremen, his father was a furniture-maker. **Bodo Ebhardt** died on February 13<sup>th</sup> 1945 in The Marksburg, a castle where he had lived since 1909.

## Bodo Ebhardt (1865-1945)

Throughout his life he was fascinated by classicism and archaeology, he looked back in admiration to the Middle Ages, knightly virtues and the age of chivalry. He was anxious to match the achievements of his grandfather Wilhelm I and to become known as a great emperor. This ambition expressed itself in **the restoration of Haut-Koenigsbourg**. He followed the project's progress very carefully, developed a close relationship with the architect and visited the site every year.

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