



The Whole Village Project

An integrated approach to cultural heritage conservation in
Saxon Transylvania



ACTIVITY 6: GOOD PRACTICE DISSEMINATION

- Goals:**
1. To produce guidelines for Saxon buildings
 2. To produce leaflets with recommended techniques in intervening on a historic house
 3. To open 3 information points
 4. To draft a local development plan.

1. Guidelines for Saxon buildings (see attached documents):

- i. “*Ghid de reparatii pentru casele sasesti*” (Romanian) and “*The buildings of the Saxon villages of Transylvania – a guide to general repair*” (English), produced by Marianne Suhr.
- ii. Gabriel Lambescu’s lime mortar and lime wash guide.

2. **One leaflet for each of the following:** facades, roofs, windows and shutters, barns and stables, and paving (see attached documents).

3. Information points:

- i. **Viscri, Bunesti commune**

Opened on Sunday the 27th of May, in the presence of more than 150 guests, including local and regional authorities, international organisations and friends of Viscri, as well as MET, Horizon and Corona representatives. The opening celebration included traditional performances, a presentation by MET Romanian director Caroline Fernolend, and a church service.



Located at no. 46 in Viscri, in a large Saxon house opposite the entrance to the fortified church (a World Heritage site), the centre provides useful information to locals and visitors alike, regarding the history and cultural value of Viscri, opportunities for cultural and eco-tourism, local traditional and organic produce



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etc. There is also a hall for small seminars, meetings and concerts, a large dining area in the cellar and guest rooms have been set up in the loft to encourage sustainable tourism. Small training sessions can also be organised there.



The information centre is staffed by MET employees Caroline Fernolend and Gerhild Dootz. The building itself was restored in 2004 with support from the MET and the World Bank.

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ii. Floresti, Laslea commune

A very similar information centre was opened in Floresti at no. 42, on Friday the 25th of May. The opening ceremony included an exhibition at the newly-restored Saxon church in Floresti.



Set up in two separate rooms in the house of the village schoolmaster, the centre offers valuable information to local inhabitants about appropriate interventions on historic buildings, available financial support from national and international sources for sustainable farming, agri-tourism and building conservation. Outside visitors can find out about the history of the village, its regeneration with the help of



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Culture 2000

the MET, and tourism opportunities. There is also a guestroom for visitors. The centre is staffed by the schoolmaster, Mr Harbada, and his wife, who are employed by the MET.



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iii. Sighisoara

Sighisoara is placed in the centre of the Saxon area of Transylvania. As a World Heritage site, the Sighisoara citadel receives many thousands of visitors every year, so it is ideally situated for an information centre.



In a small historic house adjacent to one of the fortification towers, at 10 Cojocarilor Street, which the MET restored this year with the help of the Culture 2000 programme, we opened one room as an information centre for conservation, crafts and sustainable tourism. Staffed by MET employees and equipped with telephone, fax and Internet, the centre contains a number of books, leaflets, posters and



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other information materials. To make it more prominent, we have included it in the only audio guide of the Sighisoara citadel.



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4. **Integrated development strategy for the Saxon villages of Transylvania** (see attached document).

Following a series of community consultations, debates with other NGOs active in the area and expert contributions, the organisers have produced a document entitled “Strategy for the Integrated Development of the Saxon Villages of Transylvania”, including a description of present key economic, social and cultural issues in the area, the potential role of development actors and private investors, a development programme and recommendations of priority actions.

The fundamental conclusion of the document is that the Saxon Transylvania cultural and natural landscape needs urgent and firm, but sympathetic statutory protection.

5. **Guidelines for local authorities** of villages with significant cultural heritage in **drafting General and Urban Plans** for protected built areas (see attached document).



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6. A special web page dedicated to the project on the MET website:

www.mihaieminescutrust.org

7. Each restoration project in Transylvania carries a small plaque with the inscription “Culture 2000” and the European emblem.



8. Public presentations and dissemination of project results

Romanian Cultural Institute, London, May 8, 2007

A synergy of lectures, film projections, visual exhibition, dance and music aimed at raising awareness about the beauty and plight of the Saxon villages of Transylvania and about the MET's Whole Village Project, supported by the Culture 2000 programme of the European Union.



Bucharest, Romania, March 29, 2007

Project manager Luminita Holban gave a presentation at the Romexpo exhibition centre in Bucharest about the Whole Village Project and the revitalisation of the Saxon villages through training and sustainable development.

Luxembourg Society, London, March 21, 2007

Presentation of the MET, its goals and achievements, its Whole Village Project and the wonderful Saxon villages of Transylvania, to more than 40 members and guests of the Luxembourg Society in London.



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Venice, November 2 – 5, 2006

MET Chairman Jessica Douglas-Home attended the INTBAU Annual Conference in Venice, the theme: *Modernism and Conservation in the Post-War World*. The title of her paper was: *Holistic regeneration in Transylvania* in which she outlined the work of the Mihai Eminescu Trust, supported by the Culture 2000 programme of the EU, in underpinning the fragile cultural heritage of the Siebenbürgen Saxons in central Romania.

Sudeley Castle, UK, October 9, 2006

Marianne Suhr, presenter of BBC2's architectural series 'Restoration', and MET Chairman Jessica Douglas-Home, gave a joint talk at Sudeley Castle on 'The Saxon Villages of Transylvania'.

Dinkelsbühl Saxons' gathering, Germany, September 29 – October 1, 2006



*Jessica
Douglas-
Home with
the Mayor of
Dinkelsbühl,
Germany.*

Mihai Eminescu Trust Chairman Jessica Douglas-Home and Trustee Mary Walsh attended the annual gathering of Saxons in Dinkelsbühl, Germany. The occasion also marked the twinning agreement between the cities of Sighisoara and Dinkelsbühl. On Saturday, through translator Susanne James, Jessica Douglas-Home gave a talk in the town hall about the work of the Trust, gave examples of successful Saxons who have returned to Transylvania and made an impassioned plea for more to follow their example. The Prince of Wales also addressed the large gathering through a video produced as part of the Culture 2000 programme, expressing his own deep admiration for Saxon cultural traditions and he undertook to play his part in preserving this unique heritage for future generations.

Ludlow, UK, September 9, 2006

Caroline Fernolend, representing Fundatia Mihai Eminescu Trust, gave a talk about our work in Saxon Transylvania explaining the Trust's role as an exemplar in maintaining a historic village culture and way



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of life in today's world. The chairman of the Trust, Jessica Douglas-Home, described the Culture 2000-supported "Whole Village" concept, combining heritage conservation with economic regeneration. Colin Richards, conservation officer for South Shropshire District Council, concluded with a presentation on the building and operation of a traditionally designed brick-making kiln in Caroline's home village, Viscri.

9. Co-organiser Corona Association also promoted the project, in Romania and in Germany:

They presented the project in the council of the major's office in Apold and invited the vice-major of Apold to visit the site. People from the village were invited to a photo exhibition following the two training workshops organised in Apold.

The photo exhibition was also showed in two church communities in Berlin to promote the project in Germany. A larger promotion with a flyer is planned for autumn 2007 in order to raise funds for the continuation of the activities.

10. Europa Nostra Award, Sotckholm, 8 June 2007

In recognition of the achievements of the MET – supported by its donors and friends, including the European Union's Culture 2000 programme – Europa Nostra and the European Commission awarded the Trust the top prize for Dedicated Service to Cultural Heritage Conservation in Europe, during a ceremony attended by more than 200 Europa Nostra members, EU Commissioner Jan Figel and Their Majesties the King and Queen of Sweden.



MET Chairman Jessica Douglas-Home receiving the Award from HRH The Prince Consort of Denmark.