

Hungarian Stamps 2012

TIHANY BENEDICTINE ABBEY



The independent Tihany Benedictine Abbey is celebrated with a block of stamps

In commemoration of the independence of the Tihany Benedictine Abbey Magyar Posta is issuing a special block of stamps. On the stamp picture of the block the bird's-eye view of the building complex of the Benedictine Abbey of Tihany can be seen. On the right side of the frame drawing there is a part of the altar, at the bottom on the left there is a picture of the undercroft, and on the right there is a picture of the foundation document. On the special envelope that belongs to the serial numbered block there is the view of Lake Balaton, and on the special cancellation stamp the silhouette of the building complex can be seen.

The Benedictine monastery of Tihany was founded by King Andrew I in 1055, in honour of Saint Anianus and the Virgin Mary. According to legends Saint Anianus, being the bishop of Orleans, saved the city with his prayers from Attila the Hun, and his memory was cherished by French rulers for centuries. It is not clear how the saint became worshipped in Hungary, but it can be definitely associated with the founder king. By now the medieval monastery has disappeared completely. Very certainly the fact that a few stone carvings have remained and the undercroft from the 11th century has survived nearly untouched is due to the respect shown to Andrew I, who is buried here. Later on, because of the Turkish attacks monastic life in Tihany terminated, and soldiers moved into the monastery. The building complex became a border fortress and it was reconstructed to suit the aspects of defence. After the liberating wars fought against the Turkish the royal chamber returned the lands on the liberated areas to their former owners only after they had paid a so-called ransom of arms. The Hungarian Benedictine Order could not pay this ransom for Tihany, so in 1702 it was transferred into the ownership of the Altenburg Benedictine Abbey of Austria. The Benedictine Archabbey of Pannonhalma bought it back in 1716. The church was consecrated in 1754 temporarily, and 20 years later it was consecrated finally. In 1786, on the basis of the order of King Joseph II the monks had to leave their monastery, only one monk was allowed to stay to perform the tasks of the parish. The members of the order could return to Tihany in 1802. In 1889-1890 the building complex was completely renovated. In 1950 the monks were forced to leave their friary again. The parish remained, but first a poorhouse and then a museum was moved into the friary. The Benedictine Order was allowed to return to Tihany in 1990, but it was only in 1994 that the monastery complex was given back to them. In 1992 the internal restoration of the church was started, and it was completed in 1996. In 1996 the complete renovation of the monastery was started. (Source: tihany.osb.hu)

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