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Archive of the City of Pilsen, Plzeň

Archive of the City of Pilsen

The topic of my presentation is my home institution – the Archive of the City of Pilsen. I would like to briefly introduce the institution, its history, its main fonds, archival cultural monuments, and especially the possibilities it offers to researchers.

The Archive of the City of Pilsen was established in 1948, but its history is much older. Pilsen was founded in 1295, and the keeping of town documents, especially privileges, was an important part of the town administration. These privileges were kept in a chest in the town hall. The first professional city archivist was appointed in 1782. His name was Petr Pamperle. His successor was not appointed until 1869. His name was Martin Hruška, and he wrote a book on the history of Pilsen.

Another step toward a modern archive was the establishment of the municipal museum in 1878. The city archive was part of the Municipal Historical Museum from 1878 to 1948. During the reorganization in 1948, the archive was separated from the museum and became an independent institution. The Archive of the City of Pilsen became a department of the town's local government. Today, it is a department of the Pilsen municipality (Magistrát města Plzně).

The Archive of the City of Pilsen currently takes care of 1,908 fonds and holds 4.4 kilometres of archival records. But we are a living institution, we are still carrying out the disposal processes and expanding our collections with new documents and new fonds. We manage three types of fonds:

1. Fonds of institutions from Pilsen – This group includes fonds of local governments (národní výbory, Magistrát města Plzně), villages that became part of Pilsen in the 20th century, as well as guilds, schools, cultural organisations, and various societies.
2. Personal and family fonds of city inhabitants – There are important personal fonds of writers (e.g. Ignác and Jaroslav Schiebl, Karel Klostermann,

Bohumil Polan), theatre artists (Josef Kajetán Tyl, Vendelín Budil, Josef Skupa), composers (Antonín Devátý, Bohdan Gsöllhofer), and technicians.

3. Collections – We hold collections determined by the type of archival material (e.g. collections of photographs and postcards) as well as thematic collections (e.g. the Collection of Documents on World War II and the Resistance, and the Collection of Documents from 1989–1990).

There are seven archival cultural monuments in the Archive of the City of Pilsen. The most important for the history of the Czech Republic is probably the manuscript of the drama *Fidlovačka* by Josef Kajetán Tyl, which contains the text of the Czech national anthem.

The archive also includes a library with an extensive collection of publications related to West Bohemia.

It is possible to study archival records and library materials in our study room. The archive is located in the rear wing of the Pilsen City Hall. Another study option is the digital archive, where many digitized manuscripts and photographs are available.

The Archive of the City of Pilsen also publishes the journal *Minulostí západočeského kraje* (The Past of the West Bohemian Region) and books on the history of Pilsen. The most important publications are *Dějiny Plzně v datech od prvních stop osídlení až po současnost* (Prag 2004) and the three-volume *Dějiny města Plzně 1, 2, 3* (Pilsen 2014, 2016, 2018), which maps the history of the city from its beginnings to 1990.

Another project of the institution is the digital Encyclopedia of Pilsen.

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Digital archive:

<https://digiarchiv.plzen.eu/va-demecum/>



Encyclopedia of Pilsen

<https://encyklopedie.plzen.eu/home-mup/>



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