

The Frey Museum

Since this summer puzzling news about the Frey Museum fill the head-lines of the local press. With the Frey Museum, an institution which was established by the late Dr. h. c. Georg Frey in the early thirties and which he brought to world-wide reputation, the founder created his own monument. What is happening now, fills us with sadness, especially those who had been closely connected to Dr. Frey and his work.

Dr. Frey died in 1976*) and in his last will he expressed: "4. The beetle-collection should be managed by our executor as long as it will not be sold. It should be conserved as a whole and should be sold only as a whole.

It should be offered for sale by our executor in the following sequence:

- a.) Freestate of Bavaria
- b.) German museums
- c.) European museums
- d.) Noneuropean museums
- e.) Private collectors.

As long as the collection is in the possession of the community of the heirs, the fund for the support must be provided by this community and the collection and the museum must be conserved in the condition, in which it was at the time of the death of Dr. Georg Frey."

The task of conserving the collection in its original state was fulfilled with a reduced staff. Additionally, the executor asked Dr. G. Scherer from the Zoological State Collection in Munich, a former employee of the Frey Museum, to visit the Frey Museum from time to time to take care of it. This was done during all the years as an official service of the Bavarian State. Library work with concerning correspondence was done, editorial work up to now, loan arrangements had been made by the State Collection for security because it was in a figurative sense an "orphaned" museum. For contamination work the staff of the Coleoptera Section from the State Museum was in Tutzing, many drawers had been gasified in the State Collection and material was repaired. The Bavarian State even provided the room for the Frey Collection when the new building for the Zoological State Collection was built recently. That all these facts are wellknown to the colleagues in Basel is evident from correspondence.

*) Ent. Arb. Mus. Frey 27: VII–XXII.

Dr. h. c. W. Wittmer, a retired employee of the Museum in Basel, to whom Dr. G. Scherer from the State Collection felt ties of friendship for over 30 years, misused the knowledge received by conversation with Dr. Scherer and used a discordance in the community of the heirs to deceive the state Collection in Munich (June 25, 1987). Wittmer's and Brancucci's bad conscience forced them to conceal their "horse trading" till August 1987 when they started to collect money in the public for the "planned purchase". The community of the heirs and the State Collection learned it by radio. The Bavarian state brought its influence to bear and is considered together with the heirs community to transfer the Frey Museum to a national monument. The Bavarian State placed a disposal which he won at court of first instance. This forbids Basel to bring the collection out of the country. To evade the law, the Basel Museum now signed a loan agreement for thirty years and a first claim after that time with one person out of the heirs community. They try by all means to move the collection to Basel, even by defamation of Dr. Scherer, for example by arguing that he didn't clean the "show-cases", that the Chrysomelidae Collection isn't what it was valued, and so on. Summarized, a dirty business.

When the Basel colleagues try to tell that Dr. Frey at life time had in mind to give his collection to Basel for he was so befriended with this museum it must be asked, why did he put the Bavarian State and other German museums first in his last will. From 1958 till 1973 there was no visitor from Basel in Tutzing. The relations between Basel and Tutzing had been the same as to other museums and nothing more. All is evident in Dr. Frey's last will which is now so badly neglected. His relations to Munich can be additionally seen by the fact, that Dr. Frey was president of the "Society of the Friends of the Zoological State Collection".

Recently somebody gave way to the question, "doesn't there exist a code of honour between museum workers"?

The editor

ZOBODAT - www.zobodat.at

Zoologisch-Botanische Datenbank/Zoological-Botanical Database

Digitale Literatur/Digital Literature

Zeitschrift/Journal: [Entomologische Arbeiten Museum G. Frey](#)

Jahr/Year: 1987

Band/Volume: [35-36](#)

Autor(en)/Author(s): Scherer Gerhard

Artikel/Article: [The Frey Museum. 247-248](#)