

Important Individuals of the City

Peter Schöffer – Co-Inventor of the printing machine



At the begin of the modern age, 1425 Peter Schöffer was born in Gernsheim. Along Johannes Fust and Johannes Gutenberg the trio invented the first printing machine. His work was very important for the way books have spread during the time in Europe. The multi-talent Schöffer was the one who, with enormous efforts, completed the technique and distributed the way to print books. A statue to his honor can be found on the Schöffer square with the Schöffer house.

Joseph Schmitt – Life and Impact

Joseph Schmitt was born March 18th 1734 in Gernsheim in the same building that now has the resataurant “Zum Karpfen” in it. At the age of 19 he joined the Cistercian monastery Erbachand where he earned the priest orders October 9th 1753. As “regens Chori” Schmitt was registeres from 1763 to 1771. During that time his duty was the music in the abbey during prayers and service. Only three pieces are left from that time.

Johann Friedrich Lehne – Universal Scholar



Friedrich Lehne was born September 8th 1771 in Gernsheim and raised by his uncle, Professor Mühlkamp at the age of 10, when his parents died. After his graduation 1790 he studied History and the fine arts. Without an employment he joined the French national guards. This was a tough time for him both physically and mentally. In this situation he agreed to a journey to Italy friends financed and it became the basis for his epistolary novel "Romantische Seereise von Genua nach Neapel" published in 1825. Since 1804 he led archeological diggings in Mainz and was even visited by Goethe in Zahlbach where he lived. With his studies in Mainz he also helped to prove that Gutenberg, not Coster invented the printing machine which led to a large number of monuments. In 1829 he got ill and died as a result on the 15 of February 1836.