



Anyone seen this dredger around the rivers in Europe?



DDSGs SCHÖNBRUNNs Long History

The sending of mail along the Danube using the DDSG ships can be seen as a long tradition. The company was founded in 1829, and began running services to Budapest only one year later, rapidly extending its routes down to the Danube estuary. In 1834, the company's first ocean-going ship, the **MARIA DOROTHEA**, was launched. The fleet of ships grew continuously, and included a total of seven ocean-going vessels, and was soon operating services not only along the Danube but also to Constantinople and the eastern Mediterranean.

In 1845, the ocean-going ships were sold to Österreichische Lloyd from which time on the transport of mail by the DDSG was limited to the lower Danube. However, this activity gained in importance to such an extent, that from 1866 to 1880, the company even issued its own 10- and 17-Kreuzer stamps. The mail ships were included in the DDSG timetables until 1939, although mail was no longer regularly carried on these routes. The issue of a stamp showing the most famous of the DDSG's surviving steamships 180 years after the company was founded commemorates a long-standing enterprise that was of major importance for the Austrian economy.

SCHÖNBRUNN (paddle steamer)
Austria #B383 (2008) 2.65 + 130

1912 –DDSG; DDSG Shipyard, Obuda (Altofen) near Budapest, Hungary; Displ. 556 ton; 74.62m x 15.78m x, 1.73m (max. draught); equipped with inclined compound steam engines supplying 710 hp, 25 km downstream; until 1985, carried 900 passengers, thereafter 250.

She was built as a paddle steamer at DDSG's own yard and for their own account, together with the paddle steamers **WIEN** and **BUDAPEST**. Along with the steamers **ERZHERZOG FRANZ FERDINAND** and **HERZOGIN VON HOHENBERG**, (built one year later in Linz and renamed **JOHANN STRAUS** and **FRANZ SCHUBERT** respectively after the First World War), they all were intended to improve regular traffic between Vienna and Linz and Vienna and Budapest.

The ship survived two world wars in good condition, and was converted from coal-fired to oil-fired in 1954 at Linz; with the addition of extensive covered accommodation on

the main deck. She was also refitted in 1974. There followed a number of other transformations: the interior decoration in particular being given an appearance intended to recall the Austrian Jugendstil.

Until 1985, she was used with the **STADT WIEN** and **STADT PASSAU** in the daily service between Vienna and Passau with overnight stops at Linz in each direction. In



1986, she began twice weekly Budapest sailings, along with a Sunday excursion to Dürnstein, returning by steam train. In 1987, she did a full service on a weekly base from Vienna to Passau and in 1988, she was laid up at Korneuburg near Vienna. However, steam operation was labour-intensive, which made the running of the ship increasingly uneconomical, and from 1990-94, the **SCHÖNBRUNN** was used as a floating casino in Budapest.

In 1994, she was towed to Engelhartzell where she became the centerpiece at the Upper Austrian Provincial Exhibition. After the exhibition was finished in November 1994, she was towed to Linz.

(SCHÖNBRUNN, continued on page 66)