

## Women at EHH

Nestled outside of Riga in the town of Kandava in Latvia, Rumene Manor stands as a testament to Baltic German heritage, with roots dating back to the 1300s. The present construction dates from 1876 and is a magnificent Neo-Gothic manor. EHH had the chance to have an exchange with Ms. Egita Karlsonē, whose family has been established in the estate for the last 20 years: "My husband's family purchased the property 20 years ago and has been restoring it ever since. They also restore and manage historical properties in Riga that belonged to their family before World War II."

When questioned on possible challenges related to gender in her role of managing a historic house, Ms. Karlsonē noted "I am responsible for overseeing the overall management of the property and managing its business as an event space. Owners and managers of historic properties encounter similar difficulties, regardless of gender, dealing with technical, staffing, and financial issues. Interestingly, 46% of managerial positions in Latvia are held by women, which is the highest percentage in the EU. The biggest challenge is combining the responsibilities of motherhood with work, but I think we are quite far ahead in Latvia in this respect as compared to many other countries. "



Additionally to managing her historic house, Ms. Karlsonē is the president of the Latvian Private Historic Houses Association and is not afraid of taking over great responsibilities to ensure the promotion and conservation of this heritage: "It comes with a sense of great responsibility. Who knows? 200 years from now someone might be studying how we operated the manor!".

What inspired her to take over such leading roles in her life is also the many amazing women who surround her. But Ms. Karlsonē made a point of mentioning her 96-year-old grandmother: "Despite surviving two world wars and the Soviet occupation, she still has a totally positive view of the world".

Regarding activities at the manor, Rumene Manor has hosted numerous famous women, from politicians to artists and businesswomen: "After all, Latvia is a small country, and

## European Historic Houses

Rumene Manor is well-known". However, because a historic house is also a family home, some private moments are the most cherished and Ms. Karlson accepted to share one of her best memories related to the manor: "A cherished memory at Rumene Manor involves my son's first birthday celebrations with a picnic on the lawn on a beautiful August day. It felt timeless, filled with people and kids running all around."



Rumene Manor

Ms. Karlson is surely one important member of our association, and she tries her best to advocate for Latvia's cultural heritage to be better recognised on the continent and within the EU. EHH is proud to help her in this matter. Finally, Ms. Karlson encourages to take a minute to discover the country: "Both Latvia and Rumene Manor almost always exceed expectations. So come for a visit!"