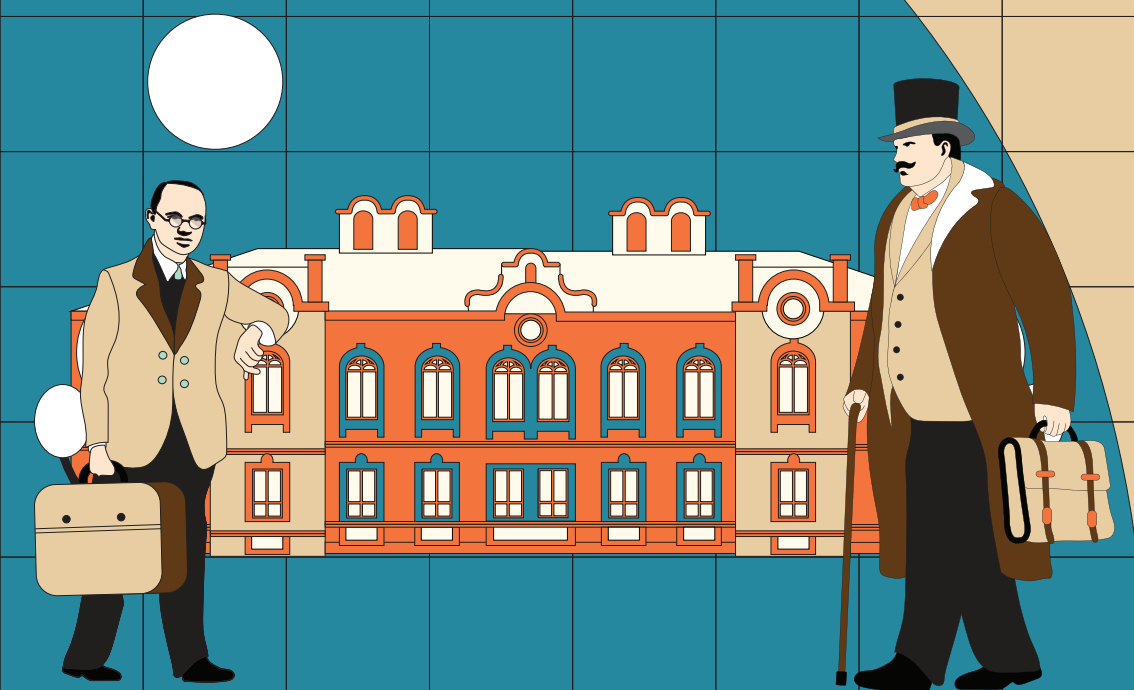


IT'S KAUNASTIC AROUND KAUNAS WITH A DIPLOMAT



HI!

For just over twenty years during the interwar period, Kaunas served as the capital of Lithuania. A time of immense development when thousands of new buildings were erected, many new businesses started, and important higher education and state institutions established. Kaunas became a fast-paced and vibrant city, with large numbers of Lithuanians returning from major cities across Europe, as well as a wide range of different foreign nationalities coming to settle here. And what is a capital city without its diplomatic community? Albeit temporarily, many international countries set up their embassies in Kaunas, installed their representatives, and at the same time established a busy network of diplomats across the city. If you look deeply, you will probably find all the ingredients for a series of thrilling stories of intrigue and secrecy in diplomatic Kaunas. Perhaps you will decide to write your own script while enjoying your diplomatic access to Kaunas?

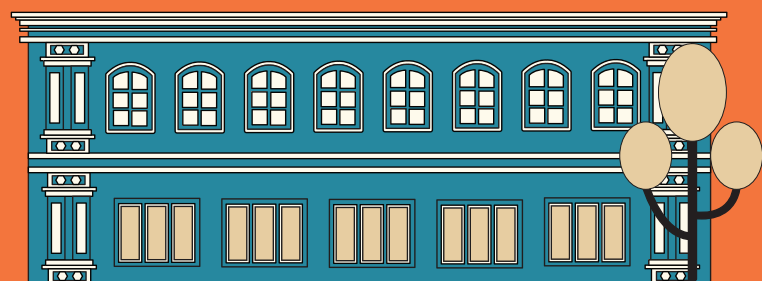
PUBLISHED: 2021

VISIT THE CREATIVE CENTENARY:

100 YEARS OF THE DIPLOMATIC SERVICE OF LITHUANIA EXHIBITION

The exhibition promises visitors an insight into what is often invisible in everyday life but necessary for Lithuania's statehood: the history of diplomacy in Lithuania. The setting for this exposition is symbolically linked with Lithuania's independence. It was here from 1921 to the Soviet invasion in 1940, that the Lithuanian Cabinet of Ministers sat, as well as it being the official residence of the Minister of Foreign Affairs. Today these historic premises are part of the Vytautas Magnus University, and the very hall where the University's Rectorate meets was once the focal point of attraction and interest for diplomatic corps residing in Kaunas.

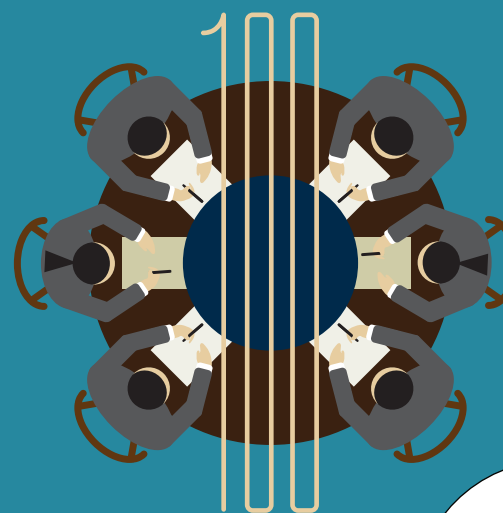
Four exposition spaces are open to visitors: the first presents the origins of the Lithuanian diplomatic service, its formation and activities in the interwar period; in the second room, the spirit of the office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Stasys Lozoraitis (1934-1938) is restored. Here visitors can see the authentic office furniture, along with some of the Minister's personal items. The third room presents the activities of the diplomatic service during the Soviet occupation period of 1940 to 1990, and the work of Lithuanian diplomats to ensure the policy of non-recognition of Lithuania's annexation and the restoration of independence. The fourth exhibition room covers the period of 1990 to 2018, and brings the visitor right up to date with the activities of the diplomatic service. With the help of virtual reality, you can experience a working day in the life of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and get acquainted with the activities of the modern diplomatic service.



The authors of the exhibition are diplomats Dr Vytautas Žalys and Prof. Dr Alfonsas Eidintas. The permanent exhibition was organised in the building of Vytautas Magnus University's Rectorate by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Lithuania together with partners Vytautas Magnus University, Lithuanian Central State Archives, Lithuanian National Museum of Art, National Museum of Lithuania, Vytautas the Great War Museum, M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art and Kaunas City Municipality.

KURIANČIAJAI
LIETUVOS
DIPLO
MATIJAI

K. Donelaičio g. 58, Kaunas
We kindly ask you to register
before attending the exhibition
at diploamatijos.paroda@vdu.lt



MORE KAUNASTIC ROUTES

Wondering what to do next? Great news – we've been publishing illustrated maps since 2015. Here are some of the themed routes available in English:

Welcome to Kaunas
Modernist's Guide
Wallographer's Notes
The Litvak Landscape
The Litvaks of Slobodka
The Sugihara Route
Gastro Guide

The Ethnic
Trail Kid-Sized Kaunas
The City of Champions
Culture Shock
Double Weekend
A Hanseatic Merchant's story
Kaunas in Film
100 Years of Theatre

For free publications, visit the Kaunas IN tourist information centre (Rotušės a. 15, Kaunas), or locations labelled with the "Tourism Information Friendly" or visit.kaunas.lt Digital versions of the routes are available at kaunastika.lt

USEFUL HASHTAGS

#kaunastic #visitkaunas #kaunaspilnas #kaunas2022 #LTDiplomatinėTarnyba

TOURISM INFORMATION

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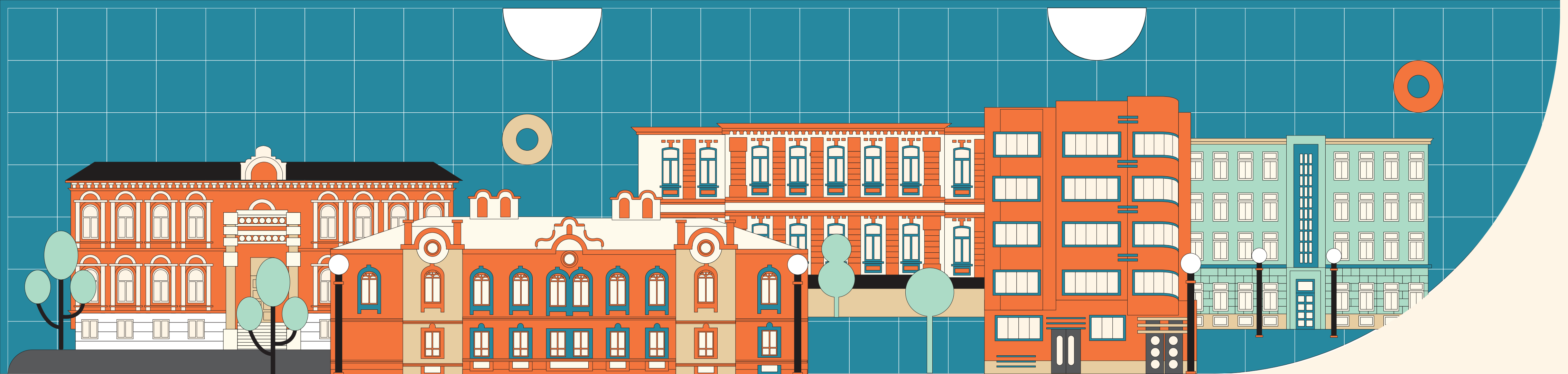
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MINISTRY
OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA

www.urm.lt





1 **PARLIAMENT (SEIMAS)
PALACE OF THE REPUBLIC
OF LITHUANIA**

1920–1927
Gimnazijos g. 3

Although today the building is the Maironis Secondary School, its history stretches back almost two hundred years. Designed by Nikolajus Ciginas, the Kraziotis College was transferred here in 1863 and became the building's first occupants. From 1920 to 1922, the college provided advanced learning courses, paving the way for the start of the University of Lithuania, from which all major Kaunas universities and academies later grew. From 1920 to 1927, the Lithuanian Parliament met in this building for four terms, as did a number of government commissions.

2 **THE HISTORICAL
PRESIDENTIAL PALACE**

1919–1940
Vilniaus st. 33

From 1919 to 1940, this 19th century building served as the presidential palace of the First Republic of Lithuania. All four interwar period presidents resided and worked here, and it was here that the last parliament session took place before the Soviet occupation in 1940. During the years of occupation, the building was used for many purposes including a cinema. Today, the palace is a branch of the M. K. Čiurlionis National Museum of Art and it hosts a permanent exposition about the presidency period and other related historical exhibitions.

3 **CABINET OF MINISTERS OF
THE REPUBLIC OF LITHUANIA**

1921–1940
K. Donelaičio g. 58

At the end of the 19th century, as the Tsarist-era fortress was being constructed around Kaunas, this building was built as the residence for the head of the city's board of engineers. In 1919, it became the Lithuanian Ministry of Education and in 1921 the Cabinet of Ministers, which functioned here until 1940. During this time, the second floor was the official lodgings of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Stasys Lazoraitis (1898–1983), who lived here with his family. During the Soviet occupation, it housed the Science and Technology Committee, the Trade and Culinary School and later, one of the faculties of Kaunas Polytechnic Institute (now Kaunas University of Technology). Today the building is used by the Rector of Vytautas Magnus University, as well as housing the museum of father and son diplomats, Stasys and Stasys Lazoraitis, along with the permanent exhibition Creative Centenary: 100 Years of the Diplomatic Service of Lithuania.

4 **BANK OF LITHUANIA**

Maironio g. 25

With an exterior that is truly monumental, matched with an interior that is luxurious and elegant in its design, the building of the Bank of Lithuania is testament to the bold ambitions of the First Republic of Lithuania. Designed by Mykolas Songaila and opened in 1929, the Bank of Lithuania was the first representative object of this level in the temporary capital. Also of interest is the fact that bank once had permanent residents. The first Lithuanian Prime Minister, diplomat, and Minister of Foreign Affairs Augustinas Valdemaras and his family lived here in a luxurious eight-room apartment (though not far long as he was exiled in 1930). The apartment included a library, reception rooms with a small balcony, a separate entrance to the building, and an elevator. In addition, the building was equipped with apartments and garages for employees. These days, you need to plan in advance your visit to the bank, though it is well worth it as the building is one of the great pleasures you will find in discovering the secrets of Kaunas during the interwar period.

5 **MINISTRY OF FOREIGN
AFFAIRS**

1919–1922 m.
Maironio g. 27

Across the road from the Bank of Lithuania is what used to be the Ministry of Foreign Affairs between 1919 and 1922. It was built in 1913 to be the Kaunas branch of the State Bank of Russia, and was one of the few buildings in Kaunas with central heating. With temporary capital status in 1919, the building was occupied by several ministries, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Cabinet of Ministers, who took over the entire second floor. Currently the building houses the Museum of the International Police Association in Kaunas, but it is only open with special invitation.

6 **MINISTRY OF FOREIGN
AFFAIRS**

1922–1935 m.
S. Daukanto g. 25

In about 1909, this was originally a three storey house with spacious apartments for rent and a shop on the ground floor. In 1920, the owners rented the building to the Lithuanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. It was here, not too far from the Hotel Metropolis, that foreign consuls and vice consuls would submit their credentials to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and only then officially start their duties in Lithuania. However, the building lacked a conference hall big enough for their needs and so a new place had to be found. Currently, this fully renovated building now contains the library and museum of former President Valdas Adamkus, as well as the Lithuanian Emigration Institute of Vytautas Magnus University.

7 **MINISTRY OF FOREIGN
AFFAIRS**

1935–1940 m.
K. Donelaičio g. 73

Built in 1935 for the needs of the agriculture bank, it also became home to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in the same year, with the entire fourth floor adapted to its needs. An alarm system and an automatic telephone exchange were also installed. Magdalena Avietėnaitė, a famous Lithuanian journalist, diplomat, and public figure worked here, and in 1924 she represented Lithuania at the first International Telegraphic Agencies Conference held in Bern, Switzerland as well as being the only woman there. Designed by architect Karolis Reisonas and engineer Pranas Markūnas, the building is decorated with bas-reliefs created by the sculptor Bernardas B. Bučins, and it retains many of its original features. In 1951 the building was given to Kaunas Polytechnic Institute, and is now the central administration office of Kaunas University of Technology.

8 **U.S. CONSULATE AND
EMBASSY**

1930–1940
V. Putvinskio g. 68

Originally the property of former Minister of Internal Affairs and Kaunas Mayor, Jonas Vileišis, this imposing 1930 modernist building became the residence of the delegation of U.S. diplomats who had previously been living in several locations in the city – including the Hotel Metropolis. The embassy ceased to function on September 5th, 1940 after the Soviet occupation of Lithuania. Despite this, the United States never accepted the occupation, and continued to recognize the diplomatic status of Lithuanian envoys and consuls.

9 **CONSULATE GENERAL
OF SWEDEN**

1930–1933
V. Putvinskio g. 64

Built in 1928 by the famous Lithuanian architect, Vytautas Landsbergis-Žemkalnis, the Swedish Consulate was located on the ground floor of the building from 1930 to 1933. The building was also once the home of the artist and public figure Antanas Žmuidzinavičius and his wife Marija Putvinskaitė, sister of the person the street is named after. From 1966 it has housed the Antanas Žmuidzinavičius Creations and Collections Museum – better known as the Devils Museum.

10 **CONSULATE GENERAL
OF SWEDEN**

1934–1940
Embassy of Czechoslovakia
1934–1939

Consulate of Argentina
1940

**HONORARY CONSULATE
OF BELGIUM**

1934–1939
V. Putvinskio g. 60

This five-storey building built in 1933 was designed by architect Bronius Elsbergas and owned by the notary Kazys Škėma. It had an elevator, and in the courtyard, a conservatory and several garages. It was a popular centre of diplomacy, providing offices as well as residential apartments for diplomats. From 1934 to 1940, the Swedish Consulate's office as well as the consul's apartment was here, along with the office of the Argentine Consulate where the consul also lived (1940). On the third floor, the Czechoslovak embassy, and the family apartment of envoy Dr. Jan Skalický (1934 to 1939). During the same period, the Belgian Consulate was here, with an apartment rented in 1938 by the Belgian Vice-Consul Henri Hunebelle.

11 **CONSULATE OF ARGENTINA**

1938–1939
Soviet Union Trade Agency

1933–1938
V. Putvinskio g. 42

A two-storey ornate brick house with an impressive balcony supported by columns and from which street parades were once inspected. For a long time the house was leased by its owners to diplomatic missions or their representatives. Consul of Argentina, who worked here, Arnaldo Barsanti was also a composer of tango music. Representatives of Germany and Poland resided here. Built in 1900, the building continues to catch the eye of passersby. Today the it houses an antique shop open to the public.

12 **APOSTOLIC NUNCIATURE
OF THE HOLY SEE (VATICAN
DIPLOMATIC MISSION)**

V. Putvinskio g. 56

This beautiful white building was specially designed by architect Vytautas Landsbergis-Žemkalnis for the Vatican Embassy, although the envoys of the Holy See for political reasons never settled here. The building was later adapted for use as a children's hospital, and around the mid-1970's, the Kaunas Artists' House was established here, with visitors welcome to call in and see what's going on.

13 **HUNGARIAN HONORARY
CONSULATE**

1938–1939
V. Putvinskio g. 54

This elegant apartment building with a terrace on the roof was designed by architect Adolfas Netyksas. The Hungarian Consulate was located in one of the apartments here from 1938 to 1939.

14 **HOME OF DIPLOMAT
VOLDEMARAS VYTAUTAS
ČARNECKIS**

1939–1941
V. Putvinskio g. 49

Voldeмарas Vytautas Čarneckis was a very important and influential public and political figure in Lithuanian history. He served as a Member of Parliament, Minister for Foreign Affairs, and Lithuanian representative in Italy amongst many other important governmental roles.

15 **HONORARY VICE-CONSULATE
OF HUNGARY**

1940
V. Putvinskio g. 11

Built during the spring of 1940, and in the same year it became the Hungarian Honorary Vice-Consulate, as well as the official residence of the Honorary Vice-Consul, Dr. Aronas Braudis, who was also a member of the Statistics Council of the Ministry of Finance.

16 **POLISH EMBASSY**

1939
Kęstučio g. 38

Designed in 1932 by one of our most famous architects, Feliksas Vizbaras. At the time of its construction, the building was referred to as the 'Kaunas skyscraper'. The Polish diplomatic mission leased a number of rooms in the building in 1938, having moved here from their previous space in the old Lietuva Hotel. A fabulous looking building from both the front and the back, this modern and luxurious building was recently renovated and continues to attract fans of modernist architecture.

17 **BRITISH EMBASSY
AND CONSULATE**

1924–1940
Kęstučio g. 29

In 1924 the British Embassy, and its appointed envoy for Lithuania, resided in Riga, although the consulate and a passport office could be found at several addresses in Kaunas. In 1929, they began to permanently work from Kaunas. Thomas Hildebrand Preston was the longest serving diplomat here, being first appointed as a consul in 1930 and working through a number of other diplomatic roles until 1940. It is interesting that the former Embassy building on Kęstučio g. suffered acts of vandalism with windows being broken, especially after the events of 1935 in Palestine.

18 **FRENCH EMBASSY
AND CONSULATE**

1929–1932
V. Putvinskio g. 14

Another Vytautas Landsbergis-Žemkalnis designed building, this one built in 1926 originally for a relative. Three years later the French Embassy moved in and stayed until 1932, although the Head of Mission continued to live in this building until 1940. The building currently belongs to the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences, and there are plans to establish a study centre dedicated to the Kaunas-born French philosopher Emanuel Levin.

19 **EMBASSY OF THE
SOVIET UNION**

1924–1928, Laisvės al. 8
1929–1940, Laisvės al. 10

The embassy of the Soviet Union was one of the largest in Kaunas in terms of the number of employees who were frequently changing. In 1937 a Kaunas journalist wrote the following about embassy life and the Soviet Union Head of Mission, Mikhail A. Karsky - who held office from 1930 to 1937: "The Russian representative Mr Karsky is not so academically minded. He wants to get closer to society and supports artists coming from Soviet Russia. He loves the sport of ice skating. There is even a special skating rink made for him in the courtyard. Thus, the Soviet Embassy is the best equipped of all the embassies; after all, it not only has a skating rink for the Minister but also a school for the children of the embassy's employees".

20 **GERMAN EMBASSY**

1924–1941
Gedimino g. 19

Before Lithuania's independence, Gedimino g., built in the 19th century, was called Kielevskaya and Ludendorffstrasse. During the interwar period, it was an important diplomatic and political axis, linking Kęstučio, Donelaičio, and Putvinskio streets which all hosted embassies, diplomatic offices, and ministries. The German Embassy rented its premises in a previous building of Gedimino g. 19.

21 **ESTONIAN EMBASSY**

1930–1940
Parodos g. 24

Having recognised Lithuanian independence, the Estonian diplomatic representative for Lithuania initially resided in Riga, and then in 1923 was based in Kaunas. Laisvės Alėja was the first residence, followed by K. Donelaičio g. before finally moving to Parodos g. in a house built in 1930 with impressive views of Kaunas, where it occupied an entire floor.

22 **THE RESIDENCE OF THE
GERMAN ENVOY**

1924–1941
Perkūno al. 4

This wooden villa on the edge of the current Vytautas Park hides an exceptional history. The building was transported from Germany and assembled in Kaunas on the instructions of the German Head of Mission, Franz Olshausen. In fact, the diplomat had to fight for the opportunity to settle in this picturesque area some way out of the city centre. The villa, atypical of Kaunas, was somehow left abandoned for many years, but thankfully it has now been renovated and functions as a bistro and a bar with a large outdoor seating space.

23 **CONSULATE OF SWITZERLAND**

1937–1938, Vydūno al. 15,
1938–1940, K. Donelaičio g. 45

The Consulate of the Swiss Confederation in Independent Lithuania was established in 1923, in Bažnyčios street (the building did not survive). The Swiss diplomats settled in the Žalialaknis district in 1937, in a building designed by Antanas Jakimas. The Swiss rented the first floor, and Count Alvis Cippico, Counsellor of the Italian Embassy, occupied the second floor. In 1938 the consulate moved to K. Donelaičio g. in the city centre to a house designed by Stanislovas Bukovskis, where it remained until 1940. A commemorative plaque was unveiled here in 2008.

24 **HOME OF FORMER PRIME
MINISTER MYKOLAS
SLEŽEVIČIUS**

K. Donelaičio g. 13

From 1931 until 1939, former Prime Minister (and Minister of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Justice, and Member of Parliament) Mykolas Sleževičius lived here until his death. On the outside wall, you can see a memorial plaque made by the sculptor Leonas Strioga. The building is now the Children's Literature department of the Maironis Lithuanian Literature Museum, and is open to the public. You can learn more about Mykolas Sleževičius within the building.

25 **NORWEGIAN HONORARY
CONSULATE**

1933–1940
Nepriklausomybės a. 7

At this time, there was no permanent residing Norwegian consulate head of mission for Lithuania in Kaunas. The permanent residence of the consulate would have been in Stockholm or Helsinki. However, the consulate envoys would periodically visit Lithuania, and the address of their office in Kaunas was constantly changing and migrating from the city centre to the old town. From 1933 till 1940, the office was located in one of the apartments in the building on Nepriklausomybės a.7, which is now commemorated by a plaque hanging on its facade.

26 **FINNISH CONSULATE**

1936–1940
Kęstučio g. 8

The building is one of the earliest examples of functionalism in the city. Formally housing several families, it also accommodated a small hospital ran by Elchanan Elkes who later died in Kaunas ghetto, as well as the first Montessori kindergarten.

27 **LATVIAN EMBASSY**

1923–1940
Intersection of Kęstučio g. and Vytauto pr.

The building is no longer here, but at the intersection of Kęstučio g. and Vytauto pr., until the end of the 20th century there stood a brick building, where the Latvian Embassy was located from 1923 to 1940. The house was demolished in the 1980s. Today there is a small commemorative plaque on a stone sculpture, which was unveiled in 2003 on the 85th anniversary of Latvia's independence.

28 **HONORARY CONSULATE OF
THE NETHERLANDS**

1928–1940, Laisvės al. 42,
1940, Laisvės al. 29

The first Dutch consulate was on the corner of Laisvės Alėja and A. Mickevičiaus g. You can see a plaque on the wall here that reads: "The Consulate of the Kingdom of the Netherlands was located in this building until 1928. In 1940, it was moved to Laisvės Ave. 29, where Jan Zwartendijk, a prominent Dutch businessman, diplomat, and humanist, worked. During this time, he helped thousands of Jewish people and other nationals, who were in danger, to emigrate." In 2018, a symbolic light installation monument dedicated to this diplomat and his work, was unveiled by the Dutch King and the Lithuanian President in front of the Laisvės Avenue 29 building.

29 **KAUNAS GARRISON
OFFICERS CLUB**

A. Mickevičiaus g. 19

Built in 1937, according to the design of Stasys Kudokas and his engineers, this monumental building gives meaning to A. Mickevičiaus Street. A sight to behold, it combines modernism and classic features, such as the central entrance, steps and columns. This was the place to be for the diplomatic corps in Kaunas, as well as other members of the city's elite.

30 **PIENOCENTRAS BUILDING
(DAIRY COMPANY BUILDING)**

Laisvės al. 55

Designed by architects Vytautas Landsbergis-Žemkalnis and Karolis Reisonas and finally opened in 1934, this building is still very much a landmark building in Kaunas. During the interwar period, this prominent building was more than just a business headquarters for the Pienocentras company. Dovydas Zauzius, a Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the longest-serving Lithuanian interwar politician, lived on the fourth floor of the building with his wife, the internationally renowned opera singer Vincė Jonuškaitė. In the same building Juozas Urbšys, another prominent Minister of Foreign Affairs and the last to hold this position before Soviet occupation, also resided.

31 **THE RESIDENCE OF
THE U.S. ENVOY**

1938–1940
Trakų g. 18

In 1937, in a cosy modernist quarter near the bus station, a house designed by the famous architect Stasys Kudokas was built for Ramūnaldas Dulskis, the former Head of Civil Protection (Police Commissioner) at the Ministry of Interior. However, from 1938 to 1940, the U.S. embassy operated from here and the Embassy Head of Mission, Owen I. C. Norem, also chose to live here too. The building currently accommodates the National Scout Bureau.

32 **CONSULATE OF JAPAN**

1939–1940
Vaižganto g. 30

Originally the home of Juozas Tonkūnas, the Lithuanian Minister of Education, the building became the home and workplace of the Japanese diplomat Chiune Sugihara. Sugihara issued thousands of transit visas to Jewish refugees to allow them to travel through Japan, and like the Dutch consul Jan Zwartendijk, helped several thousand Jews avoid the Holocaust. Today the house is a museum and attracts thousands of guests from Japan and Israel.

33 **ITALIAN EMBASSY**

1927–1940
Vydūno al. 13

The stylish palace-like house bordering the Ažuolynas park belonged to Romanas Palovinkas, a rich local construction company businessman. He built the house to lease it to diplomats. The building came with a spacious yard and an annexe for guests, and was equipped with a terrace, and a wine cellar. The Italian embassy rented the building until Lithuania lost its independence.

34 **PETRAS KLIMAS' VILLA
EGLUTĖ**

Vaižganto g. 25

Petras Klimas was a signatory of the independence act of February 16th 1918. He was a renowned diplomat and served Lithuania in Italy, France, Belgium, Luxembourg, Spain, and Portugal. The villa, designed by the architect Feliksas Vizbaras, was named Eglutė (little fir tree) in honour of Klimas' daughter.