

# Pierre de Coubertin - Life and Work of a Humanist

- 1863 - January 1<sup>st</sup> - Pierre de Coubertin was born in Paris as fourth and youngest child of a wealthy aristocratic family
- 1864-80 - carefree childhood in a Parisian town house and at Castle Mirville in Normandy
  - Jesuits' school in Paris, A-levels equivalent
- 1880 - played the piano, was a talented musician and an enthusiastic sportsman and attached to nature
- 1880-83 - refused a military career that was planned for him
  - studied Jurisprudence and Political Sciences in Paris
- 1883-90 - Coubertin was more and more engaged in social issues, fought for a pedagogical reform in France
  - he considered sport to be an appropriate medium in the education of youth and supported the introduction of pupils' physical education
  - several study trips to England, Canada and USA
  - numerous publications on pedagogical and historic topics
  - devoted himself to the founding of pupils' sports clubs and the leadership of organisations at a national level
- 1892 - lecture at the Parisian Sorbonne: Announcement of the revival of the Olympic Games
- 1894 - Founding of the IOC, Coubertin took over the post of first secretary
- 1895 - marriage to Marie Rothan
- 1896 - 1<sup>st</sup> Olympic Games in Athens; Coubertin became IOC- president
  - birth of his son Jacques
- 1897 - 1<sup>st</sup> Olympic Congress in Le Havre under the leadership of Coubertin
  - several trips through Europe in order to study the political situation and to disseminate the Olympic idea
- 1900 - Olympic Games in Paris; Coubertin is disappointed, because these were overshadowed by the World Fair
- 1902 - birth of his daughter Renée
- 1906 - revolutionary at his time: Coubertin founded a society for workers' sports
  - intended to introduce universities for workers
  - numerous publications and essays on physical education and pedagogics
- 1912 - Coubertin introduced the Modern Pentathlon at the Olympic Games in Stockholm and opened the "Pentathlon of Muses" (art competitions)
  - he himself won a gold medal for his "Ode to sport"
- 1915 - changed the IOC's headquarters to Lausanne
- 1925 - resigned from his function as IOC- president;
  - was appointed to lifetime honorary president
  - founding of the Universal Pedagogical Union
- 1926-27 - publication of his four-volume World History
  - lived until his death in Switzerland; bequeathed his fortune so that his ideas could be made real
- 1937 - had a cardiac arrest during a walk in Geneva on September 2<sup>nd</sup>



Pierre at the age of six



Coubertin with his wife Marie Rothan



Castle Mirville (Normandy) – here Coubertin spent most of his childhood