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**MOERS**

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# Tourism and culture

Your personal guide to the city of Moers



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## Editorial

The former earldom of Moers can look back on an exciting history of over 700 years. Today its citizens are proud of this diverse cultural landscape and its numerous offers to go shopping or just relax. The castle is situated in the heart of the city centre. The former home of the earls is today the museum and the theatre.

The city centre, with its many cafés and shops, offers plenty of possibilities to go shopping and have a sit down. The extensive grounds nearby invite one to go for a stroll. The city of Moers is, with its good one hundred and nine thousand inhabitants, one of the popular cities along the western border of the Ruhr area.

**In this document we have put together some interesting facts for you.**





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## Castle

### Moers Castle

*Kastell, Moers-City Center*

The Moers castle was built on a difficult to access island surrounded by wet lands. The oldest remaining



Moers Castle

piece of the castle, made out of Tuffstein (a particular type of stone) and found in the residential tower, dates back to the 12th century. The circular castle complex was es-

tablished somewhere between the 13th and 15th centuries. Until the year 1600 the castle was occupied by the Earls of Moers. Beginning in 1601 and extending to 1763, Moritz von Oranien made the castle the central point of his governing power. In 1805 the textile manufacturer Friedrich Wintgens bought the castle. He tore down the eastern part of the building and in 1836 the castle park was planned by the desi-

gner Maximilian Weyhe. This lovely old building has been the property of the city since 1905 and in 1908 the Grafschafter Museum was established and opened to the public. The castle also houses a place to present plays; in 1975 the castle theater was founded.

### Lauersfort Castle and Peterhof (private property)

*Holderberger Straße, Moers-Holderberg*



Lauersfort Castle and Peterhof

The Lauersfort castle was also built on wet lands. The east side of the building was erected in the 15th century and the west portion with its outdoor steps was added on in the 18th century. Close to the castle is the Peterhof built in the 19th century using the style of Karl Friedrich Schinkel.



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## **Peschkenhaus**

*Meerstraße 1, Moers-City Center*

This building is the oldest house in Moers. Built at the end of the 15th century, it was remodeled into a small palace in the 18th century and then plastered with a classical style roughcast around 1800.

## **Kreisständehaus**

*Kastell 5, Moers-City Center*

This house was built in Renaissance style in 1898 and later became a district administration office. Today it is home to the Volkshochschule (school for continuing adult education) in Moers and Kamp-Lintfort.



## **History depicted in stone**

### **Martinstift and „Averdunkshof“**

*Filder Straße 126, Moers-City Center*

Both of these late classical houses were erected in 1840 by the seminar director Franz Ludwig Zahn on his farm, Fild, (Averdunkshof) for the Filder Reform School. Later a middle building was added which today is home to the Moers Music School (chamber music hall). The residential house was renovated in a classical style in 1840.

### **Coal Mine and Coal Miner Settlement**

#### **Meerbeck/Hochstraß**

Built in 1904 this coal mine is the first and largest in Moers. The housing settlement established for the miners and their families was and is comfortable and attractive; between 1981 and 1996 the neighborhoods were redeveloped and they now offer housing for over 10,000 people.



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## „Linde“ in Repelen

*An der Linde 2, Moers-Repelen*

At one time this building was a farm. In 1871 it became a restaurant and then later expanded to include hotel facilities. In 1900 the „Linde“ was the center of the once popular bathing area Repelen (Lehmpastor Emanuel Felke). Not far from the „Linde“ are also other old and remarkable houses.



## Churches

### Evangelical Town Church

*Meerstraße, Moers-City Center*

This church was built in 1448 for the Karmeliter monastery by Dompolier Tilmann. In 1655-66 the aisles and transept leading to the rectory were added. The organ dates back to 1787 and the Gothic tower was built in 1890.

### Catholic Church - St. Josef

*Kastell, Moers-City Center*

This church was built in Gothic style between 1868 and 1871. A baroque group of figures is located in the choir section (Mary Heimsuchung).



Church - St. Josef

### Cemetery Chapel

*Rheinberger Straße, Moers-City Center*

This is the area with the oldest dated settlement having



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Cemetery Chapel

a church. The small place of worship was erected at the end of the 1800's (today the location of the castle theater). Many gravestones stemming from the 16th and 17th centuries can be found in this old cemetery.

## Old Catholic Church

*Hanckwitzstraße, Moers-City Center*

Prussian King Friedrich II was of the opinion that everyone in his city should worship the way he/she chooses to; this led to the decision to build the first Catholic church in 1778. (Today this structure is a kindergarden.)

## Evangelical Church

*Bendmannstraße, Moers-Kapellen*

Originally called the Ludgeri-Kapelle which was enlarged in 1561. The Gothic choir section stems from the 15th century.

## Evangelical Parish Church

*Am Jungbornpark, Moers-Repelen*

This church is the oldest in the Moers area. It was consecrated approximately in the year 700. Parts of the romantic basilica (from the 12th century) are used today for the choir section(14th century).



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## Statues and monuments

### Statue of the Brandenburg Princess Luise Henriette

*In front of the castle, Moers-City Center*



Statue of Luise Henriette

This statue by Heinrich Baucke in 1904 symbolizes the political change which occurred with discord between the Oranier and Prussian eras.

### Prussian Monument in the Altmarkt

*Altmarkt, Moers-City Center*

Donated by the people of Moers, this statue (1860, Adam Rützel) was erected in memory of the visit in 1852 by the Prussian king, Frederick IV. His visit marked the 150th anniversary of the county of Moers belonging to Brandenburg-Prussia.

### Statue of King Friedrich I

*Neumarkt, Moers-City Center*

The statue was erected in memory of this elector and first Prussian king who was also the first Brandenburg-Prussian to take over Moers (Heinrich Baucke, 1902).

### Marble Statues „Hektors Departure from Andromache“

*Castle park, Moers-City Center (reproduction)*

*In the central library, Unterwallstraße (original)*

This group of figures was designed in 1858 by Carl Causer, and in 1882 formed into statues. A reproduction of the group has been on display since 1933 in the castle park.

### Bust of Adolf Diesterweg

*Castle park, Moers-City Center (reproduction)*

*Grafschafter Museum, Kastell 9, in the Moers castle (original)*

This well known educator and first director of the Moers Educational Seminar was depicted in 1882 by



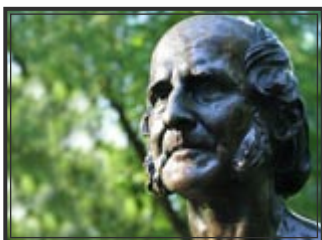


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Bust of Adolf Diesterweg

Albert Wolff in this closed bust made of copper. A bronze reproduction has been on display in the castle park since 1996.

## Wilhelm Greef-Fountain

*Castle park, Moers-City Center*

This fountain (Heinrich Baucke, 1909) was built in 1851 in memory of the seminar teacher and founder of the Moers Men's Choir.

## Shaft IV of the Coal Mine in Rheinpreussen

From 1900 to 1904 this shaft was built in order to dig for coal and in 1962 it was closed. The coal mine was the first which led the mining trend in the Moers area.



## A stroll through historic Moers

The historic Old Town (Altstadt) of Moers was redeveloped between the mid 1960's and the late 1980's. Its neat lovingly restored alleys and new houses built with respect to the older sizes and styles invite all passersby to stroll through the old city. During this time the center of the Old Town was also redeveloped into a pedestrian area. This car free zone has a comfortable flair offering a variety of high quality shops and interesting pubs and restaurants.



Home of the VHS

Our little stroll through the Old Town begins at Kastellplatz. During the Renaissance in 1898 townhouses were built at Kastell; now home of the VHS, you will pass the statue of the Oranier princess and electress of Brandenburg, Luise Henriette, on your way to the





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Statue of Luise Henriette

Moers castle. Always an area with a prestigious well-kept charm, the castle was originally occupied by the Earls of Moers. Today the castle is a museum. A visit to the museum is a journey through the history of Moers and the lower Rhein area stretching from the Roman times to the 20th century. After visiting the museum, a look at the theater, also located in the castle, is a must. This modern playhouse is well known throughout the area.

Shortly before the castle, you will see on your left, St. Josephs, a Catholic church built in Gothic style in 1871. The building opposite the church, a structure hardly resembling a church, was originally the first Catholic church in 1778. Today this building is a kindergarden. The park adjacent to the castle was designed around

1836 by Maximilian Weyhe modeling an English garden. A walk through this „green heart of Moers“ along the castle moat and embankments formerly the city wall, and by some rather exotic groups of trees, is recommended.



The green heart of Moers

After a brisk walk we leave the park behind and pass the newly built townhall on your left. Continue on the „Im Rosenthal“ street where you will find Oranier style built townhouses possessing a common roof: The gable on the house at the corner of Haagstr. No. 61/63 can be dated back to the year 1640; House No. 22/24 on Fieselst. was also built that year. This spot was the location of the „New Gate“ signifying well into the 19th century the end of the „New Town.“ The locals call this area „Klompwenkel“ for the store which used to sell special wooden shoes (lower Rhein slang : klompenshoe).



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At the other side of Fieselstr. you will see the „Brandgassen“ (Brand-alleyways), which once lined the city wall. Continuing right onto Neustr. brings you to the Neumarkt (New Market Place) with the statue of King Friedrich I. About 350 years ago a „sea“ separated the



Statue of King Friedrich I

Old Town from the New Town in this area. In its place today, farmers and other traders offer a variety of goods every Tuesday and Friday.

On the right at the junction of Neustr. and Neumarkt you will find a Gothic townhouse with a classical front.

This house was built in the 15th century thus giving it the reputation as the oldest house in Moers. In the 18th century it was remodeled into a small palace. Plastering with rough cast in classical style gave it its unique look still evident today. The building was home to the gallery Peschkenhaus from 1972 until 2002.

The Protestant church opposite the gallery was originally built as a monastery (around the 15th/16th centuries),



Protestant church

but its new steeple was finished about 1890. The pedestrian zone continues on to Steinstr. including a church on your left and extends further in the direction of the Altmarkt with the Prussian statue. A couple of housefronts can be dated back to the 17th/18th centuries. Gerhard Tersteegen (1697-1769), the

mystic and religious songwriter, was born in the house at Altmarkt No.1.

Passing the Adler-Apotheke leads you to the Kirchstr. building No. 38 which is especially interesting. This house „Rösgen“ was erected in 1677 and plastered with a rough cast in classical style in 1780; today it houses a pub with a medallion above the entrance portraying the



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face of Friedrich II (The Great). At the so-called Gänsebrunnen (geese wells) the Friedrichstr. branches off from the Kirchstr. where the old town wall used to be. Newly restored houses true to the old designs form this neat alley. The houses to the right branching off Pfefferstr. are also constructed using former styles, and house No. 14 still sits on the original foundation.

The continuation of Friedrichstr. (crossing Steinstr.) is Burgstr. It's worth taking a second look at houses No. 10 and 12 which were erected 1776.

The Burgstr. leads the way back to Kastellplatz, the starting point of this stroll through the Old Town. A recommended excursion onto Haagstr. to your left at the end of Burgstr. brings you to a large building built in Dutch baroque style in 1913; today it accomodates the district court.

Another interesting house is No. 26, built in 1794 as a classical townhouse. Between 1823 and 1870 it housed the seminars for the Protestant teachers' association. These seminars were established and run by the prestigious educational social reformer and publisher, Adolf Diesterweg (1790-1866). The adjacent house attracts attention for its early baroque stucco style from 1616.



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## History

### 2500 B.C.

Discoveries unearthed in today's Hülsdonk - proof of early Stone Age settlement.

### 500 B.C.

Proof of settlement in Moers.

### 12-11 B.C.



First proof of settlement

First Roman camp (Asciburgium) in Moers-Asberg was established by Drusus, King Augustus' step son. As a result, a border (no longer respected) developed on the left embankment of the Rhein called

Limes. This camp was eventually abandoned around 83-85 A..D.

### 9 A.D.

Moers was first officially registered as „Murse“ in an official document from the monestary in Werden.

### 12 A.D.

The oldest part of the castle (the residential tower) in Moers was made from Tuffstein (a particular type of stone) during this time.

### 1186

First written document about an Earl in Moers.

### 20th July 1300

The settlement near the castle is given city rights by King Albrecht I, who also secures the new city with moats, walls and embankments.





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**1373**

Sir Johann of Moers, the governing Earl Theoderich's brother, is given the right to produce coins.

**1400-1500**

The so-called „New Town“ is developed beside the thickly settled Moerse.

**1560**

Introduction of the Reformation by the Earl Hermann of Moers.

**1582**

The Earl Adolf establishes the Adolfinum High School which still exists today.

**1601**

The last countess of Moers dies in 1600. Moritz von Nassau-Oranien, general of the United Holland inherits Moers.

**1702**

The county of Moers is passed to Brandenburg-Prussia by inheritance.

**1706**

Moers becomes a principality.

**1794**

Moers is occupied by the French and belongs to . . .

**1801**

. . . the „Département de la Roer“.



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## 1805

The textile manufacturer Friedrich Wintgens buys a part of the fort, the barracks, and then the castle and starts a cotton spinning mill in the side buildings.

## 1815

After the Napoleon era, the whole Rhein area including Moers, is given back to the Prussians.

## 1820

Adolf Diesterweg establishes the first Protestant teachers' seminar and becomes its first director.

## 1836

With the permission of Mr. Wintgens, Maximilian. Weyhe designs the park by modeling it after an English garden.

## 1857-1974

Moers becomes a district town in the Moers district.

## 1900

Population of Moers rises to 6,240 and in its district villages to 6.075. With the beginning of the coal mining era, Moers, once a city with country charm and prestige, negatively changes its social structure as the population booms. The 1st Rheinpreussen-Shaft (IV) of Moers starts producing in 1904 but is later closed in 1962.

## 23rd December 1903

Train connection from Duisburg via Trompet to Kleve is open to the public.

## 1904-1914

The settlement Meerbeck/Hochstr. provides housing for approximately. 10,000 coal miners & blue collar workers and their families. This fresh attractive settlement is later extensively redeveloped between 1981 and 1996.



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## 1905

The town of Moers purchases the castle and opens the park to the public.

## 1st January 1906

The surrounding villages of Moers are united with Moers.

## 1908

Grafschafter Museum located in the castle opens to the public.

## 1918-1926

After the first World War Moers, as well as other parts of the Rhein area, is under Belgian occupation.

## Starting in 1936

In the chemical plants in Moers-Meerbeck a method is discovered to make synthetic fuel out of coal.

## 1927 – 1934

In Repelen the two coal mines named after Heinrich Pattberg, head of the mine management since 1892 and technical director of Rheinpreußen, are put into operation.

## From 1936 onwards

The chemical plants in Meerbeck use a process for the extraction of synthetic petrol from coal.

Moers during the National Socialism (1933 – 1939)  
30 January 1933: seizure of power by the National Socialist party.

Owing to local government elections a month earlier the city council is solemnly opened on 5 April, 1933 with a strong National Socialist majority (16 of 32 seats).

Streets and squares are renamed in the spirit of Na-



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tional Socialism. Despite obvious signs of violent and extreme behaviour of the National Socialists, and the repeal of all fundamental rights such as liberty and freedom of speech through the „Reichtagsbrand“ – decree of 28 February, 1933 the NSDAP is strongly underestimated by the municipal and political authorities of Moers.

All resistance, especially that of the KPD, is persecuted by the National Socialists who also prevent all communist tendencies. Important individuals of the resistance in Moers are the communists Adam Erbach, Johann Meimers, Friedrich Pusch and Walter Kuchta. The Social Democrats Wilhelm Müller and Hermann Runge also offer strong resistance in Moers. Runge, who works for the bread factory „Germania“ in Duisburg-Hamborn, hands out illegal (Social Democratic) leaflets across the lower Rhine, cooperates with emigrants, sends reports criticizing the NSDAP to foreign countries, and

organizes unauthorized meetings with other Social Democrats outside Germany. Because of this he is sentenced to nine years of prison on 11 December, 1936. The Hermann-Runge-comprehensive school (Gabelsberger Street 14) which was founded in 1996 bears his name.

Some Jews emigrate before October 1941. Those who stay fall victim to bureaucratic and administrative harassment such as dispossession, and are deported into the east after 10 December, 1941. One hundred and eighty Jews are killed in the synagogue district of Moers.

## **Moers during WWII**

During the war (outbreak in Moers: 1 September 1939) five thousand soldiers are called up in Moers. Their jobs are taken over by women, and several thousand forced





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labourers stemming from the east. The bombing starts on Pentecost in 1940. One hundred and sixty people in Moers are killed by bombs with five hundred and five homes destroyed, and another two hundred and eighty-six agricultural, commercial and public buildings (for example, the administration building Kastell and the grammar school Adolfinum) heavily damaged.

Most children (except ten thousand) are sent from Moers to other locations less at risk from bombing.

U.S. troops reach Moers on 4 March, 1945 thereby ending WWII in this region.

## **1965-1988**

The historic Old Town is redeveloped and changed into a pedestrian zone. The coal mining crisis begins. The town of Moers develops a business area called Hochstr. and Hülsonk in the mid 1960's as a reaction to the crisis.

## **1st January 1975**

Municipal change. The town of Moers and the communities of Kapellen and Rheinkamp are united to form the new town of Moers. Moers remains the largest town in the new district of Wesel, but must give up its district town status to the town of Wesel.

The castle theatre in Moers is founded.

## **1981-1996**

The settlement for blue collar workers and coal miners in Meerbeck/Hochstr. is extensively redeveloped.

## **1987**

According to the census, Moers has a population of over 100,000 and it is now officially a city.

## **1990/1993**

The coal mines of Rheinpruessen and Pattberg close.



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## 1996

The development of the technology park Eurotec (on the property of the former Rheinpreussen coal shaft) concludes. Companies begin settling there.

The 25th anniversary of the International Jazz Festival and the 20th anniversary of the International Comedy Arts Festival.

## 1997

The development of the Grafschafter Businesspark begins. This unique project which could be used as a model for similar undertakings includes the the city of Moers, the towns Kamp-Lintfort, Neukirchen-Vluyn and Rheinberg.



## Overlay shelves in Moers

Only a few metres separate the Rhine from the overlay shelf Rheinpreußen which seems like a bridgehead between the lower Rhine and the Ruhr area. With the top at a height of sixty metres the plateau offers a spectacular view of the industrial landscape of Duisburg in the west.

The even cultural landscape of the lower Rhine can be seen when facing east. The overlay shelf Rheinpreußen plays an important role within the concept called „Landmarks of Industrial Culture“ that encompasses the Ruhr area. Having been the first site for coal mining on the left side of the lower Rhine it is a place which exceptionally reflects the history and values of mining.



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**To suit the significance of the site it was decided to**

give artistic form to this artificial hill  
turn it into a viewing platform and  
facilitate events.

The lightsartist and co-founder of the ZERO-movement Otto Piene took up the predominant elements of this epoch („Fire“ and „Mining“), and fashioned them into his artistic concept „Geleucht“ thus making it possible to experience them in a new way. His plans are to cover one side of the hill in fiery red by using extensive floodlights.

A walk-in tower with a height of twenty-eight metres will be erected on the platform. Its light and form are supposed to call to mind the historically most important and safest lamp of the coal miners; the Davy lamp which has been used and improved upon since 1830.

The first stage of construction was completed by positioning the floodlights to illuminate the site on 30 March, 2006. Since then, eight thousand square metres of the north-eastern side of the construction are bathed in red light by thirty-five pylons.



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## The overlay shelf Pattberg

The overlay shelf Pattberg was finished and planted with grass, bushes and trees several years ago. Extended paths for cycling and hiking make it easy to climb the seventy-five metres to the plateau. From up here the „conqueror of the peak“ has a stunning view of the Ruhr area, the charming landscape of the lower Rhine, and the surrounding cities.

The Pattberg is part of the „Tour of the industrial culture“, and the centre of the „Treecircle of the lower Rhine“. A concept developed together with the „Regional Association of the Ruhr Area“ (RVR) intends to let the hill go down in the history of the lower Rhine as the mysterious „Dragonhill“. Children and adults will hopefully soon be able to scout the „Dragonpath“, play in the „racket-mud-land“ or listen to the Dragonsaga while having a picnic in the „Eye of the Dragon“.





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