



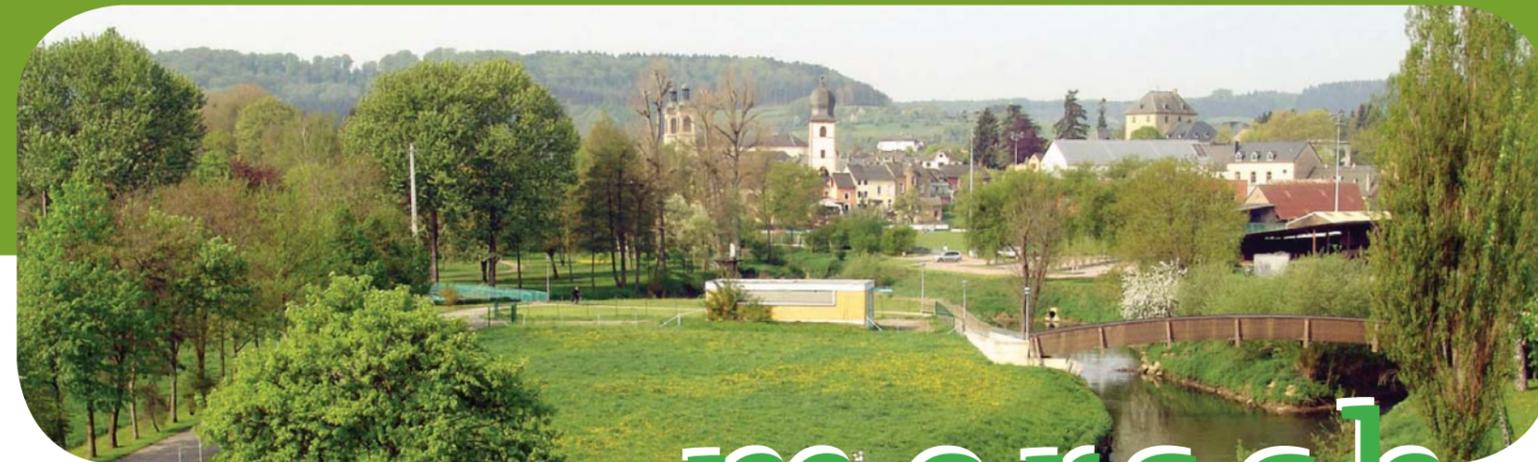
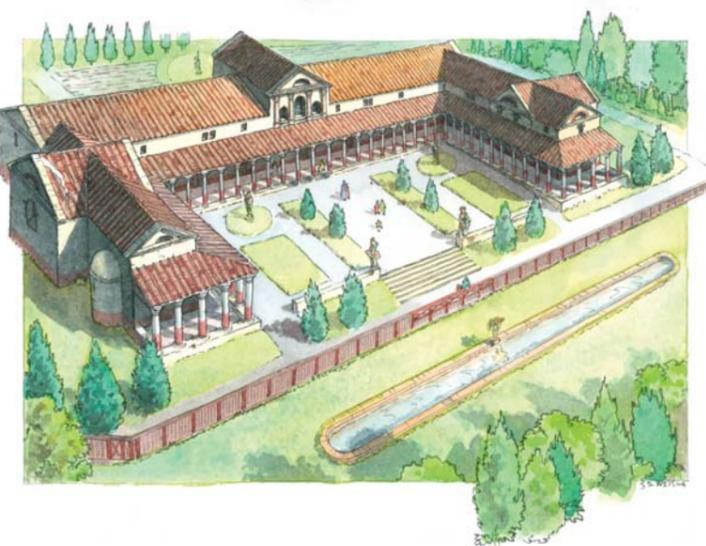
Fountain



Hypocaust

+ GALLO-ROMAN VILLA

The area of a grandiose Gallo-Roman villa stretches out before us. Part of the villa site was excavated between 1905 and 1906 under the leadership of public architect K. Arendt. When the fields at Mies were made available as building land in around 1966, the excavation works revealed a large number of Roman remains. The State Museum was made aware of this and began excavations, which led to the discovery of the large (75.60m x 6.50m) water tank. This tank was capable of absorbing 385m3 of water and had an aesthetic, sporting and profitable character. In the middle of the tank more large slabs were found. The sealant consisted primarily of layers of loam deposits. A draining channel, which transported surplus water from the Mamer, runs from the centre.



mersch

Historical overview

The State Museum also conducted special works to gain an understanding of the full dimensions of the villa. Archaeologists found more foundation walls, including a cellar (3.80m x 5.40m x 2.40m), meaning that we can assume it was a large and magnificent villa (approx. 200m x 60m). The villa was occupied from the 1st until the 4th century, and two main periods can be differentiated here. The villa had at least two rooms, which were each heated by means of a hypocaust (warm air heating) and at least one room was decorated with a mosaic. A pavilion was constructed over the section of the villa that was excavated in 1905-1906, which constituted the villa's left wing. A system for a hypocaust facility can be identified.

HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

Mersch spreads out in a picturesque location 224 metres above sea level, in a large valley formed naturally through the confluence of the rivers Alzette, Eisch and Mamer. Ruins and mosaic remains of an extensive villa at "Mies" reveal that Mersch was already densely populated in the Gallo-Roman era. The earliest preserved written documents however date back only to the middle of the 9th century (853, will of Erkanfrida).

The characteristic centre is the high-lying castle.

The landmark of Mersch is St. Michael's Tower. The current parish and deanship church was built in Neoclassical style with an impressive colonnade doorway.

Further west you can catch a glimpse of the independence monument on the slopes of Kronenberg.



St. Michaels's Tower around 1900



faber
IMPRIMERIE

COMMUNE DE MERSCH

Château de Mersch
Tel.: 32 50 23 - 1

TOURIST INFORMATION

Tel.: 32 96 18 (July/August)

www.mersch.lu



IMPRESSUM

Photos:
Geschichtsrënn
Nico Lucas

Texts:
Geschichtsrënn
Guy Pauly

Illustrations:
Geschichtsrënn
Serge Weis

Layout:
NO LIMITS



+ PARISH AND DEANSHIP CHURCH

On our way to the church we can admire some impressive aristocratic residencies and farmhouses with fine entrance gates. A few years ago, a sculpture of "Jesus is the path" by Rollingen sculptor Serge Weis was erected at the front of the church. This portrayal is intended to show that everyone who follows and believes in Jesus will find the path into the Kingdom of Heaven.

After the church at Michelsplatz had fallen into ruin, a new chapel was built on the model of the Stenay church (France).

This church with three naves, in late-Classicist style, was constructed between 1844 and 1850. The gable, borne by four Doric columns, contains a relief representing the eyes of heavenly omniscience.

The interior is distinguished by clear lines and proportionate distribution of space. The altar room chancel is closed off by a circular apse. The architecture and internal decor of the new church (44.50m x 21.50m) make it one of the finest in the country according to art experts.

Between 1934 and 1939, the interior was repainted by artist Notker Becker OSB, from the Maria Laach Benedictine Abbey in the Eifel region. Visitors to the church, when looking at the holy pictures in which Christ takes a central place, are instinctively instilled with a certain degree of reverence of the soul.

MICHELSPLATZ

Commonly known as Market Square. Standing here, like an unconquered knight, as a landmark of Mersch is the "Old Tower" from 1709, with the statue of the dragon slayer St. Michael. Over the gateway hangs the coat of arms of the former Lord of Mersch, Count von Elter, who ordered the reconstruction; though the 35-metre-high tower was erected with money from the parish "DENARIO PAROCHIAE FACTA SUM".

The Renaissance gravestone of Baron Fock von Hübingen, Lord of Heisdorf and Reckingen, (+1573) is located inside.

The former bell tower of the old church owes its continued existence to Queen Anna Palowna, wife of Wilhelm II, King of the Netherlands and Grand Duc of Luxembourg. In 1844, the royal

couple, on a visit to Mersch, were standing in front of the onion dome, which reminded the Queen of her native Russia. She asked the Mersch local government representative not to allow its demolition. The tower remained in place and is still preserved to this day.

Demolition works were commenced in 1850 due to the risk of collapse and following construction of the new deanship church. In addition to various coins, a large number of stone coffins were found, and these were attributed to the Merovingian or Carolingian era. The most valuable find was the partially preserved memorial stone to a high-ranking Roman officer.

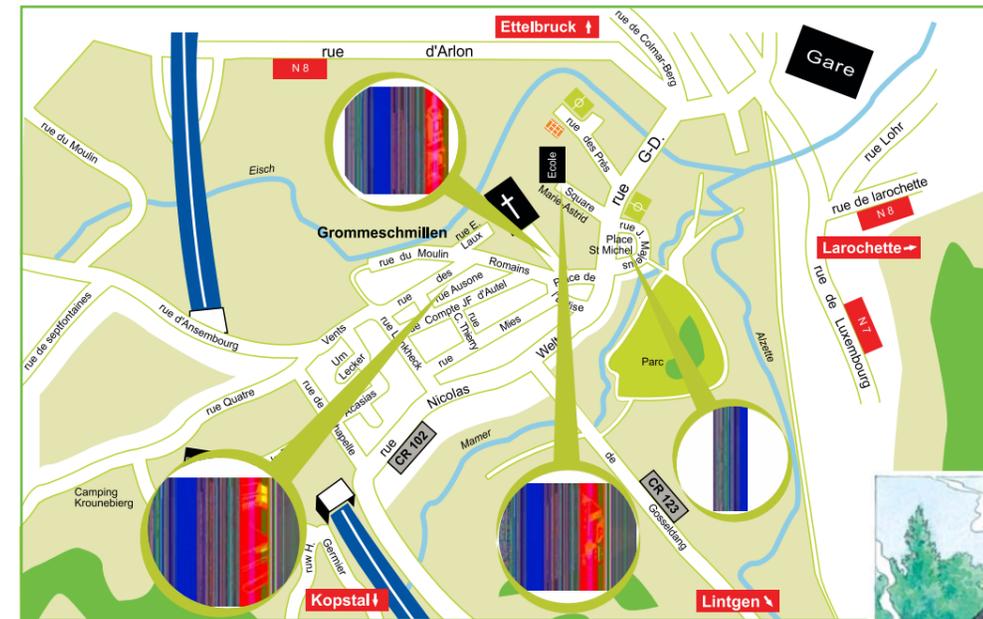
During excavations for the redesign of Michelplatz (1997), Roman brick remains were found, and thus archaeologists assume that a Roman building might have been used for the original church.

A new church was erected on this site on three more occasions. The foundations uncovered during the most recent excavations have been marked on the surface.

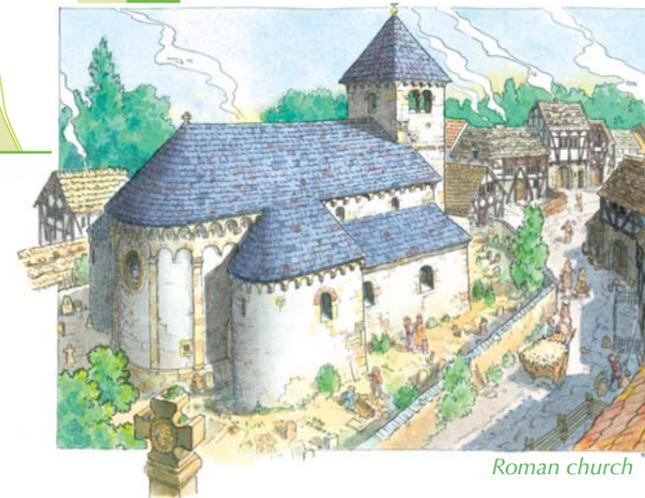
+ PARISH AND DEANSHIP CHURCH

The tower was given a companion during the renovation of the market square at the end of the 1990's, in the form of a dragon by Mersch sculptor Paul Eyschen.

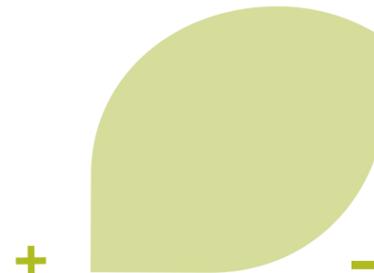
A bust on the castle wall commemorates Nic Welter, our country's most famous poet. This bust was made by Sonja Welter, a granddaughter of the poet. Born in Mersch in 1871, Nic Welter described his childhood with great affection in his work "Growing and becoming somebody". Between 1918 and 1921, the post of Education Minister ("in service") was bestowed



+ Layout plan +



Roman church



upon him. He died in Luxembourg in 1951. His work ranges from verse, epics and drama through to literary history. He was awarded the famous Joseph von Görres Prize.

The former primary school of Mersch was built in Neo-Gothic style in the middle of the 19th century. In November 1944, Dwight D. Eisenhower, who later became President of the USA, inspired his troops in Mersch. Bourgeois houses surround Michelsplatz, and many of them have a narrow front, though all possess clear individuality on the gable end.

This is also the location for the former vicarage (now a school). Rebuilt in the first half of the 18th century, it was later extended by the vicar. He arranged for an attractive Baroque pavilion to be built in the garden (in 1789), on the banks of the Mamer, popularly known as the "Temple". A plaque commemorates J.B. Neuens, who attained the rank of General Lieutenant in the Belgian Army. His tomb in the Mersch graveyard recalls his military career.

