



Nr. 15

## **A walk through the city of the clothiers 2,3 km**

The economic rise of Monschau to one of the most important clothier towns of the Rhineland started in the first half of the 17<sup>th</sup> century. The lime free water, cheap labour, the combustible peat of the high Venn, freedom from guilds and the religious tolerance of the duke of Jülich, offered the protestant clothiers perfect conditions for the production of fine cloths. Cloth from Monschau was world renown because of its outstanding quality and was sold worldwide during its haydays in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Rich patrician mansions, historic factory buildings and half-timbered houses dominate the completely preserved historic city centre. The National Park hiking trail "Water-Wool-Slate" connects the picturesque city centre with the "hedge-village" Höfen. Here you can visit the weaving museum in Haus Seebend. The National Park gate is close by. It offers information about the National Park and is the starting point for several hikes.

### **(1) Haus Troistorff, Laufenstraße 18**

The master-builder Couven from Aachen built this house in 1783 for the clothier M. P. W. Troistorff. It was built half-timbered but contemporarily fettled and decorated with ornaments. During Christmas time the windows are illuminated and artfully decorated as an advent calendar. The famous "Tapetenzimmer" is oftentimes used as wedding location.

### **(2) Foundation Scheibler museum Red House, Laufenstraße 10**

The grand patrician mansion of the 18<sup>th</sup> century is the landmark of Monschau. It used to be living quarters, office and factory of the most important clothier Johann Heinrich Scheibler who made Monschau's cloths world-renowned. The flushing canals of the wool washing and colouring rooms in the basement are still visible at the backside of the building. Today the house is a museum, which shows the pompous home décor of the clothiers. The museum can be visited from Easter till November. The highlight is the levitating wooden staircase with its artful carvings.

### **(3) Protestant church**

The rich protestant clothiers had their own church build between 1787 and 1789. The spire belonged to the Friedenskirche in Cologne and was brought to Monschau after its destruction.

### **(4) Schmitzenshof**

The so called Schmitzenshof was one of the oldest fine cloth production places in Monschau. The building is no longer in its original state though. The building, as you can see it today, is dated from 1765 and has been used among other things for the washing of wool. If you look over the Rur-river from "Stehlings" you can easily identify the building by its iron waterwheel.

### **(5) Rahmenberg**

The cloth frames, that used to be standing here, gave this hill its name Rahmenberg (frame-hill). It is secured by terraces with slate and greywacke rubble stones. The cloth used to be burlled (mending of threats) and fullled after weaving.

The extremely shrunk fabrics had to be stretched again and were spanned onto frames. The Rahmenberg is one of the most interesting ground and technology monuments of the clothier time.

### **(6) Clothier fountain**

The fountain at the market place is reminiscent of the historical meaning of the clothier industry. It is a monument for the numerous workers of the textile industry and shows a selection of the most important steps in the process of cloth manufacturing: cloth shearing, carding with teasels and weaving.

### **(7) Oberer-Mühlenberg**

This used to be Monschau's working class neighbourhood where weavers and threat spinners used to live in very cramped quarters. Most workers lived with their large families in one or two rooms and one of the rooms was occupied with a huge weaving loom. They were supported by donations or kept pigs, goats and even cows in their small houses in order to improve their meagre income.

### **(8) Elbershof, Eschbachstraße 30**

In 1804, Johann Heinrich Elbers bought this prestigious estate from 1778. The house with living and working quarters resembles the houses of the clothiers from Eupen. There were extensive production facilities in the basement. Across the street used to be the weaver corner. Further down, at the street "Rosentahl" you will find the former office, manufacturing and storage buildings of the company "Elbers".