

The History of the Memorial

1914 - 15 Reconstruction of the battery tower whose inside remained in following decades in the raw state.

1950 - 51 The first extension of the battery tower as a "memorial of the German east" according to drafts of Prof. Heinrich Blecken, technical college of Breslau (Wroclaw).

21. Oct. 1951 Inauguration celebration of the "east German memorial" with the bronze busts from Immanuel Kant and baron Josef von Eichendorff, created by Prof. Bednorz, in presence of the German President Theodor Heuss. Three bells of the Hamburg bell cemetery ring for the first time on castle Schloß-Burg at Wupper river.

21. Oct. 1956 Ceremonious handing over of the bell tower donated from the government of the country North Rhine-Westphalia with the bells from Königsberg and Wroclaw - again in the presence of Theodor Heuss, President of the Federal Republic of Germany.

1960 Announcement of a competition to the final inside design of the memorial by the Minister of the country North Rhine-Westphalia for labour and social welfare.

2. June 1962 Inauguration of the memorial of the expulsion of Prof. Kurt Schwerdtfeger in the interior of the memorial which shows a refugee's family which is revealed defencelessly to a world of the human affliction. Therefore, they stand together leant with the back each other.

December 1975 Placement of the emblems of the German provinces Brandenburg, east Prussian, Pomerania, Silesia and Upper Silesia.

October 1981 Commemoration ceremony on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the "memorial of the German east"

29 January 1995 Ceremonious unveiling of the bronze bust of Ernst Moritz Arndt. In 1848 he was a Member of Parliament for Solingen in the Frankfurt National Assembly.

May 1995 The Ernst Moritz Arndt bust was stolen from the memorial by unknown thefts.

22. September 1996 Ceremonious unveiling of a new bronze bust of Ernst Moritz Arndt.

October 2001 The "memorial of the German east" exists for 50 years. No ceremony was organised.

The memorial reminds of the 2.5 millions German people - mostly women, children and old people who have died while escape and expulsion from her East German native country 1945-1950 cruelly. It should also be a memorial against all expulsion and forced displacement in the world which still happens in spite of international reminders up to today and brings big grief about the people.

"Memorials remind us of the dignity of the victims and appeal at the same time for the watchfulness for entering in the future more than in the past for right and justice, for tolerance, freedom and human rights"

(Erika Steinbach, member of the German Parliament, president of the alliance of the expelled).

We hope everybody who visits this memorial will be encouraged to reflect and will join us against all expulsion and forced displacement in the world and will support peace and freedom.

Different cultural events organized by the territorial association east Prussian (for information call 0211/395763) and the territorial association Pomerania (for information call 0212/66901) are carried out yearly within the scope of the memorial.

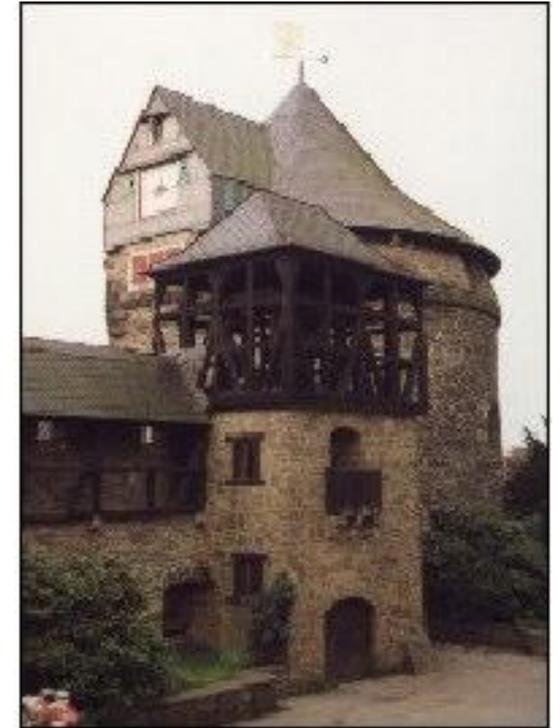
The memorial is for a long time in a constant removal and rebuilding. It is still opened continuously. Otherwise you receive the key at the cash counter at the entrance to the castle Schloß-Burg.

The entry to the memorial is free.

**Open from
May to September
Saturdays and Sundays
from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m.**

Published by

Pommersche Landsmannschaft
(Territorial association Pomerania)
Orts- und Kreisgruppen
Remscheid - Solingen - Wermelskirchen - Wuppertal



*Memorial of
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and
forced displacement
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Note: The former German east is not to be confused with today East Germany

The memorial of the former German east and forced displacement, located on castle Schloß-Burg at the Wupper river is accommodated in the battery tower. A bronze board, placed right at the entrance, points to history and meaning of this memorial. Also at the entrance to the memorial is placed another board with the text of the

The charter of the German Expellees.

The inside of the mighty, 18-metre-high interior of the round tower is controlled by the memorial of the expulsion. A stone group-plastic made by Prof. Kurt Schwerdtfeger, which is adapted of the basic form of the room, shows impressively a refugee's family in natural size. The members of the family are revealed defencelessly to a world of the human affliction. They stand together, leant with the back closely each other. In theirs completely on the essentials concentrated reproduction, this affecting representation of the memorial of the expulsion becomes an obliging call which is timeless.

Bronze busts of Emmanuel Kant - critical, idealistic thinker of East Prussia, Baron Josef v. Eichendorff - mystical, romantic poet of Silesia, and Ernst Moritz Arndt - author, politician and historian (in 1848 Ernst Moritz Arndt was a Member of Parliament for Solingen in the Frankfurt National Assembly) are displayed in large niches in the tower - pointing to the intellectual world of the German east.

About the stair rising inserted in the mighty tower wall one reaches to two ambulatories where in different glass cabinets reminiscent gifts (for example copper boards, maps and similar) are displayed and permit the varying views to the group plastic what reveals the viewer the beauty of the space. The uppermost passage ends in a small tower niche in which valuable reminiscent gifts are kept, under it copper boards in memory of the technical colleges in Breslau (Wrocław) and

Danzig (Gdansk), colour windows with frames made of lead to the memory of East German places and of the expulsion.

From the middle passage across a piece of the former defensive corridor one can precede into the bell tower where three East German bells hang which survived the war in the Hamburg bell cemetery. The most valuable and most important bell is - 1736 made in Königsberg (Kaliningrad) - the big silver bell from the cathedral of the former East Prussian capital, and further two smaller bells from the Jacobs-church in Breslau (Wrocław). The bells ring daily in memory like they once did in her East German native country.

From the consciousness of the responsibility towards the German mind that has substantially been enriched from the former east German provinces, this memorial (the only one this kind in the Federal Republic of Germany) should be a meeting place of the people of the German native country, reminding constantly to protect and preserve the inheritance assumed from the former German east provinces as a living possession.

Charter of the German Expellees
Given at Stuttgart on 5 August 1950

Conscious of their responsibility before God and men,

*conscious of their affiliation to the
Western Christian community,*

*conscious of their German origin, and realising the
common task of all nations of Europe,*

the elected representatives of millions of expellees, after careful deliberation and after having searched their conscience, have resolved to make public a solemn declaration to the German people and to the entire world, defining both the duties and the rights which the German expellees consider their basic law and an indispensable pre-condition for the establishment of a free and united Europe.

1. **We, the expellees, renounce all thought of revenge and retaliation.** Our re-solution is solemn and sacred in memory of the infinite suffering brought upon mankind, particularly during the past decade.
2. We shall support with all our strength every endeavour directed towards the **establishment of a united Europe** in which the nations may live in freedom from fear and coercion.

3. We shall contribute, by hard and untiring work, to the **reconstruction of Germany and Europe.**

We have lost our homeland. The homeless are strangers on the face of the earth. God himself placed men in their native land. To separate man forcibly from his native land mean to kill him in his mind.

We have suffered and experienced this fate. We therefore feel called upon to demand that the **right to our native land** be recognised and realised as one of the basic rights of man, granted to him by God.

However, as long as this right has not been materialised for us, we do not want to stand aside under imposed inactivity, but rather want to strive and work with all members of our nation in new, purified forms of brotherly and considerate co-operation.

For this reason we claim and demand, today as in the past:

1. Equal rights as citizens, not merely before the law but also in every-day life;
2. Just and reasonable distribution of the burdens of the last war among the entire German people and an honest application of this principle;
3. Reasonable integration of all professional groups of expellees into the life of the German people;
4. Incorporation of the German expellees into the reconstruction work for Europe.

The nations of the world should become sensitive of their co-responsibility for the fate of the expellees who have suffered most from the hardships of our times.

The nations should act in accordance with their duties and their conscience as Christians.

The nations must realise that the fate of the German expellees, just as that of all refugees, is a world problem the solution of which calls for the highest moral responsibility and for a commitment to tremendous effort.

We therefore call upon all nations and persons of good will to join in the mutual endeavour to find a way out of guilt, misfortune, suffering, poverty and misery that will lead us all to a better future.