

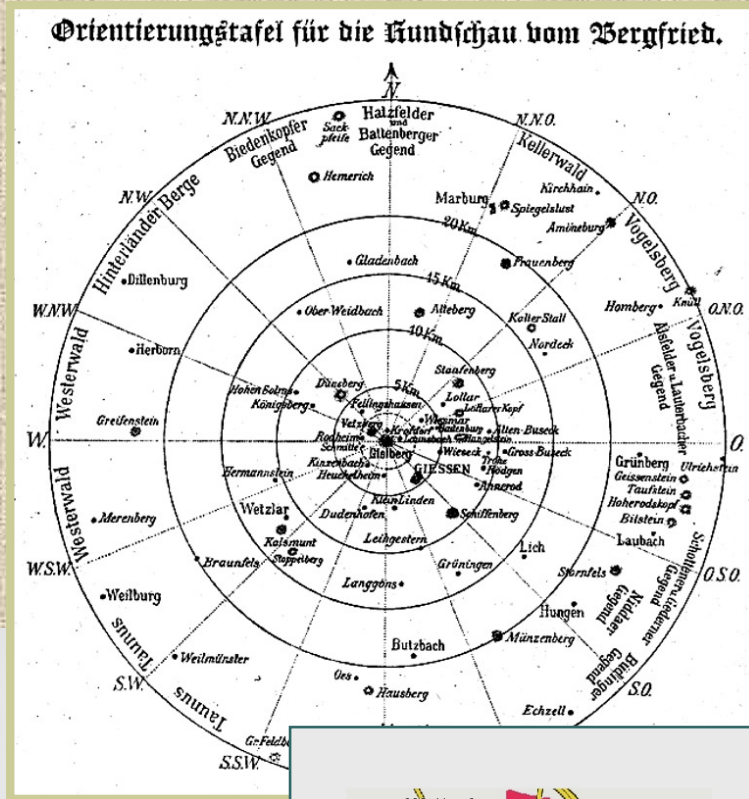


Many cultural events such as concerts, balls and fairs take place in Gleiberg.

The spacious courtyard of the castle and its terrace restaurant, the ballroom (Rittersaal), the Luxembourg-room and the new restaurants in the Nassau-building, the Albertuskeller and the Albertus-Garden invite the visitors to stay a while.

There is a marvellous view on the 30 meter high tower of the upper castle (consult the orientation-table).

During its renovation work the Gleiberg Association follows scrupulously the rules for protection of ancient monuments and takes care of nature, for instance by providing access for the bats and leaving possibilities for bird nests in the walls.



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# Gleiberg-Castle

EMBLEM OF THE  
 GLEIBERGER LAND  
 PROPERTY OF THE  
 GLEIBERG-ASSOCIATION  
 SINCE 1879

PRESENTATION OF ONE OF  
 THE ELDEST CASTLES IN  
 HESSEN



# THE HISTORY AND THE OWNERS OF THE GLEIBERG-CASTLE

## THE COUNTS OF GLEIBERG

(1000 to 1170)

Count Frederic 1 from Luxembourg probably was the first who built fortifications of the 308 meters high hill. You still can recognize the ground walls of the quadrangular tower. Frederic 1 and his successors founded the dynasty of the counts of Gleiberg who have close links with the powerful of the German empire. Kunigunde , a sister of Frederic 1, who probably was born in the castle of Gleiberg, married the emperor Henry 2. The castle of Gleiberg plays then an important part in the political life of the empire in the eleventh and twelfth centuries.

The county of Gleiberg stretches from the Land-Valley between Giessen and Wetzlar to Marburg in the North and reaches Weilburg and the beginning of the Lumda-Valley up to Buseck and Hüttenberg. In **1103**, the future emperor **Henry the fifth tears down the upper castle**. From then on and with the division of the castle and the county which follows, Gleiberg loses much of its political influence and military interest. Other remains in the region built by the counts of Gleiberg (around 1100) are the Vetzberg-castle, the abbey of Schiffenberg (1129) and the water castle of Giessen (1150).

## THE LORDS OF MERENBERG

(1170 to 1333)

They built the important monument of Merenberg and included the lower courtyard inside the moats. In **1331**, the **Gleiberg settlement which grew around the castle was surrounded by a wall and received from the emperor Ludwig the fourth the privileges of an autonomous settlement like Frankfurt**. The population consisted then mainly of officers, horsemen and servants of the castle Lords.

## THE COUNTS OF NASSAU

(1333 to 1816)

Through marriage the Gleiberg fell in the possession of the Counts of Nassau . Thus lost its destination of a residence and was downgraded to a far away administrative post on the frontier of the Nassau estates. Nevertheless the upper castle was continuously extended by fortifications. After **1575 the lower castle was built including the Albertus-house and the Nassau-building** which was used by the officers and the knights as secondary residence, it became the restaurant today. In **1646 the upper castle was destroyed and lost all military and political importance**. From then on the nearby inhabitants used it as a quarry. The lower castle as well is abandoned and only used as warehouse for the grain requested by the prince and falls near ruin.

## THE STATE OF PRUSSIA

(1816 to 1879)

The decisions made by the Congress in Vienna changed completely the map of Europe and affected also the Gleiberg which became a part of Prussia. In **1837 the "Association for the building of a staircase" in the tower of the Gleiberg ruins came into life**. Thanks to them, an entrance was opened into the 4 meter thick wall of the castle and a wooden staircase was constructed 1879 inside the tower. The first visitors came in September 1879, however the Prussian administration did not succeed in selling the Gleiberg as a profitable monument.

## THE "GLEIBERG-VEREIN"

**-responsible for the castle since 1879-**

In September 1879, the Gleiberg-Association becomes owner and commits itself to stop further decay, to undertake the necessary consolidation works and to open the monument to the public. This is the task the association fulfils still today.

Following events were important:

**1880 to 1945:**

The dwellings of the lower castle were cleaned from rubble and renovation proceeded all over the place. In the kitchen of the "Albertus-house" which is called today "Albertusklaus" a pub was opened. More rooms were built for residence and receptions "Rittersaal". The courtyard of the castle was redone and levelled. So the castle became rapidly an attractive destination for excursions. During the national-socialist time, the Gleiberg-Association did succeed in keeping the Gleiberg its property.

**1950 to 1982:**

The Association collected plenty of money by leasing the restaurant. This money was reinvested mostly in the renovation of the lower castle: The courtyard was redesigned, parking space was created along the access road. Consolidation work is also done in the upper castle, particularly in the roof structure of the Merenberg-house, in the ruins of the tower and the walls. The wooden staircase of the tower is replaced by a concrete staircase.

**1983 to 1994:**

The ruins of the former premises and the walls of the upper castle which threatened to crumble were restored at a cost of more than 2 million DM. A round-path was opened to the public inside the upper castle as well as other improvements which make it more attractive to the public.

**Since 1995:**

The activity of the Association concerns mainly the lower castle. In the years 1995 to 1999 the house-techniques were modernized and in 2000-2001 the roofs and wooden structures of the attic are renovated. The rooms are newly decorated and the old entry to the upper castle was restored in 2003-2004, part of the courtyard was paved and a garden, the "Albertus Garden", was created. The expenses for all those works amounted to 1,5 million €.