GIEBELSTADT AND ITS DISTRICTS
A historico-cultural expedition
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Dear Residents, Dear Visitors of the Giebelstadt Market.
Although historico-cultural guides show the present, they talk to us about earlier times as the history of civilisation gets tangible by means of them. With this guide the rich history of the villages in the Ochsenfurt region becomes concrete, the history of Giebelstadt, Allersheim, Essfeld, Euerhausen, Herchsheim, Ingolstadt and Sulzdorf.

If you think about your own history, you also must seriously think about the question whether this knowledge helps us, respectively has a relation to the present and a benefit for today. I think: Yes, it has. The past is a part of us. It is not detached from the present. The „today“ is not floating in the space. Historical events and cultural developments are founded on each other. Therefore everybody who is affirming the question reg. the benefit of the knowledge of history, also has to affirm the question about a historico-cultural guide. In order to fulfil Giebelstadt’s character as an European community, this guide was published in four languages.

Giebelstadt, ancestral seat of the families „of Zobel“ and the „Franconian Rebel“ Florian Geyer, which made its way from a farming village to a military garnison, is reflected in this guide. Furthermore, Giebelstadt is an up-and-coming industrial centre in the Ochsenfurt region and home of innovative companies which are distributing their products all over the world. The sentence „Giebelstadt is at home on all oceans“ gets daily newly affirmed through the sailing and motor yachts, which are manufactured by the local shipwright Bavaria Yachts.

I would like to thank the company N-ERGIE which donated a considerable part to the costs of this guide through Giebelstadt and its districts. Without sponsoring, the modern form of patronage, many cultural events nowadays could not take place. I am very pleased at least that an institution was found, which was willing to put some of their resources at disposal for this purpose.

I wish you, dear guests and culturally interested visitors, many informative and instructive hours in our community.

Yours sincerely,

Paul Merklein
Lord Mayor Municipality of Giebelstadt
Giebelstadt and its districts are situated on the B 19 between Würzburg and Bad Mergentheim, in the heart of the Ochsenfurt region, whose fertile lands were first settled by people around 5000 BC. For centuries village life was characterised by agriculture.

Giebelstadt's rich history - from a farming village to the home of innovative industry.

Giebelstadt takes its name from the alemannic noble family name „Gibule“. Its origins go back to the alemannic time (400 AD). Giebelstadt and Essfeld were first mentioned in official records in 820.

The ministerial families Geyer and Zobel owned land and fiefs in Giebelstadt and all its districts in the 13th and 14th century. In joint sovereignty together with other lords they characterised the development of Giebelstadt and its districts for over 700 years. After 1848, Giebelstadt was incorporated into the district and tax administration under the jurisdiction of the District Court of Ochsenfurt. In 1851, Giebelstadt was granted a charter with market rights.
For many centuries local village life in the area was mainly characterised by agriculture. With the construction of the aerodrome in 1934 the fundamental change of the settling, economic and social structure of the location began. From a farming village to a military site, from a military site to an up-and-coming industrial centre, place of commerce and home of innovative industry.

The barracks were taken out of service in 1996. The troop accommodation, technical area, commercial buildings and sports facilities were taken over by the Klingholz GmbH. The new owner modernised the infrastructure of the whole complex completely. The former barracks were transformed into an attractive location for innovative companies, i.e. became the i-Park (innovation park) housing over 20 companies which provide jobs for around 400 persons.

With the construction of the aerodrome in 1934 and the development of the „Giebelstadt airbase“ the settling, economic and social structure of the community were fundamentally changed. In 1968, with the establishment of the German Air Force Medical School in the newly built Emil-von-Behring barracks Giebelstadt also became home of members of the German Federal Armed Forces. It was located on a 12.5 hectare forested site, 5,000 meters in the north of Giebelstadt, called „Klingholz“, which housed until 1945 the firing range of the aerodrome.

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The impressive water tower erected in 1930, the massive steeple of the Catholic „House of God“, built in the Romanesque style of earlier fortified churches and the charming spire of the Protestant parish church are all characteristic features of the tree-fringed skyline of the market community.
The „Giebelstadt airbase“ was home of many different squadrons, which served in almost all theatres of the Second World War. From 1944, units equipped with the new Ma 262 jet fighter were also stationed here. The so-called „Eastern and Western settlements“ were constructed to house the soldiers and civilian airbase personnel. This doubled the size of the village by 1945. The population increased from 800 in 1933 to 2,800 by 1945.

At the end of the war, Giebelstadt was occupied by the 12th Armour Division and the aerodrome was used by units of the US Army and Air Force. A great demand for new accommodations was created from the mid 1970’s by the intensive use of the airfield through the US forces, the stationing of German forces (1968) and the increased settlement of businesses in the area. The resulting new constructions raised again the settled areas by a further third.

An exclusively agricultural village up to 1933, Giebelstadt thus became an up-and-coming industrial centre. The property tax deriving from agricultural land is only contributing a small percentage to the area’s economic and tax resources today. In the 70ies, during the area reform Euerhausen, Herchsheim, Allersheim, Essfeld, Ingolstadt and Sulzdorf were incorporated. The population of the complete community nowadays amounts to more than 4,800 inhabitants.
The "old town hall", the former Zobel'sche Administration Building and the "Zum Ochsen Inn", the former "Zobel'sche Village Inn" derive from the times of the Zobel sovereignty. Together with the pharmacy (1836) and the splendid shell limestone building of the former department store "Endres-Kreutzer", dating from the early period of Bavarian sovereignty, they build the upper marketplace scene. Jewel and centre is the old town hall.

First, it was built as a bakery soon after the 30 Years War by the Imperial Cuirassier Officer and Würzburg Magistrate in Röttingen, Johann Wilhelm Zobel (*1614, †1696), then becoming the seat of the complete Zobel administration in 1719. From 1782 until 1938, the "Administrative Building" and the adjacent buildings including the court yard, were property of the Jewish agricultural trading company and ironmongers Mayer, Seemann, Schwab and Solinger. The whole property was acquired by the community of Giebelstadt in 1938 and served as the town hall until 1984. Entirely renovated in 2001, the former "Zobel'sche Administration" now houses the "The Old Town Hall Public Library".
The Friesenhäuser Castle (Friesenhäuser Residence), a nice single-wing baroque edifice was named after its builders, the Friesenhäuser lineage of the Zobel family.

The eastern façade of the splendid two-story building with its imposing mansard roof is decorated by an elaborate portal with an interrupted vaulted arch bearing the crest of its original builders, the Zobel and Berlichingen families: the construction began in 1687 by Hans Heinrich Zobel of Giebelstadt and Friesenhausen and was completed by his son Johann Gottlob Zobel and his wife Maria Sophia of Berlichingen around 1700. Only for a short period, the Friesenhäuser Castle was used as a residence. It accommodated also a brewery (1814 - 1916), an inn (1874), apartments (1922) and temporarily the police station and the post office.

In 1979, the Giebelstadt municipality acquired the Friesenhäuser Castle, renovated the building and converted it into the town hall. Since 1984, the splendid baroque edifice, bordering the market place, is used by the Giebelstadt Municipal Administration, the Giebelstadt Administration Association and the Giebelstadt branch of the Raiffeisenbank Ochsenfurt. The communal archives have been housed in the attic of the Friesenhäuser Castle since 2006.
The seat of the Zobels of Giebelstadt, a four-wing Renaissance castle with the gate tower in the lower eastern wing adorn the centre of the Giebelstadt municipality.

The Zobels ruled for over six centuries as lords of the village, the manor and patrons in Giebelstadt and Herchsheim. The patrimonial court of the Zobels was abolished in 1850 and also Giebelstadt and Herchsheim completely incorporated in the Bavarian administration structure.

The family crest of the Zobels of Giebelstadt is a red horse’s head on a silver field, the black bridled head and neck are turned to the right. On the shield rests an open tournament helmet on whose crown is also the above described horse’s head. The helmet flaps are red on a silver underground.
The ministerial family Zobel, a widespread family, numbered amongst its many connections the Gentlemen of the fief of Zimmern (Lords of Grünsfeld) and Hohenlohe, the Counts of Rieneck, Wertheim and Castell, the Margrave of Ansbach, the Archdiocese of Würzburg and the Archbishopric of Mainz.

The Zobels, from the end of the 13th century the hereditary chamberlains of the Prince-Bishop of Würzburg, lived in a fortified court, which they enlarged to the Zobel Castle, a castle with rampart and moat, in the 14th and 15th century.

Both reigns were marked by confessional disputes and conflicts with Wilhelm of Grumbach and the Margrave of Ansbach.
Only the old rotunda tower and the masonry of the eastern wing survived the destruction of the Peasant War. Both were inserted in the new building constructed by Hans Zobel of Giebelstadt and his wife Apollonia of Bibra in 1545. Their achievement is outlined on the portal Relief on the north-western staircase tower in the inner court yard, which was created by Jörg Riemenschneider, son of Tilmann Riemenschneider in 1545.

The Zobel Castle received its final form around 1585 under Heinrich Zobel and his wife Amalia Truchsess of Wetzhausen as recorded by the inscription on the imposing entrance portal. In 1755, the wooden drawbridge was replaced by a solid stone bridge and the three corner towers received their striking domes.
Only a ruin testifies the once stately castle of the famous Franconian house Geyer of Giebelstadt.

At the end of the 13th century, the Geyers lived in the centre of the village, next to the Zobel estate, in a fortified court, a castle with rampart and moat, which decayed after the new construction of the Geyer Castle in the southern end of the village in the end of the 14th century. It was still mentioned as „stable of the castle“ (decayed castle) until the 16th century.

In 1441, the Geyer castle was destroyed by troops of Rothenburg as punishment for the invasion in the territories of Rothenburg. Afterwards it was re-established as a three-wing Renaissance castle with moat.

Heinrich Wolfgang of Geyer was nominated as count by the Emperor Leopold I in 1685. With him the house Geyer of Giebelstadt decayed in 1708. The castle became property of the Margrave Wilhelm Friedrich of Ansbach-Brandenburg. In 1746, Gottfried Ludwig Zobel acquired the castle.

In 1861, the municipality of Giebelstadt overtook the castle, whose northern wing was already destructed, from the property of the farmers Heiner (1784), Keller and Müller (1820). The castle became dilapidated. From 1925 until 1980 and from 1980 on, the ruin is serving as impressing scenery for the annual Geyer festival of Giebelstadt, which preserves the memories of the most famous scion of the house, Sir Florian Geyer.
The massive, widely visible and from fortified churches copied steeple of the Catholic parish church is a feature of the silhouette of Giebelstadt.

From 1951 until 1953, the St. Josef church was built according to the plans of professor Albert Boßlet (1880 - 1957) and consecrated by Bishop Julius Döpfner in 1953. It is a typical "Boßlet church," characterised by the ecclesiastical architecture style between the two world wars. Boßlet is breaking with the world of forms of the history and is finding its own style between the copying of the preceding neo-Romanticism and the predecessors of the Modern Age - modern without being ambassador of the "Modern Age".

The mosaic of the Archangel Michael in the entrance to the 153 church, consecrated in 1856 at first branch of the church of Ingolstadt, from 1942 parish church of the Catholic community of Giebelstadt.

St. Nicholas Chapel consecrated in 1856 at first branch of the church of Ingolstadt, from 1942 parish church of the Catholic community of Giebelstadt.
Catholic Church of Giebelstadt

Boßlet created a church, by using the local shell limestone, which is delicately embedded into the landscape and the profile of Giebelstadt. It shall be a widely visible orientation point for the people. During stormy and difficult times they can find security in the house of God.

The St. Josef church is a monumental building with dimensions of 48 x 38 meters, providing space for around 1,500 people. Its 29 meter high steeple is decorated by a widely visible St. Peter’s cross.

Especially worth seeing is the altarpiece „Jesus the crucified with Maria and John“ with its geometrical forms and muted colours, made by Curd Lessig (1957). Furthermore, the baroque processional Madonna, which decorates the right side altar and origins from the old demolished St. Nicholas church.
In 1824, the cemetery around the protestant parish church was moved to the north-eastern end of the village. In 1850, the municipality enlarged the cemetery for the first time, surrounded it by a stone wall and mounted the large iron gate.

In 1911, the Agricultural Councillor Kilian Keller donated the land for the second extension in order to allow the dead to rest in peace for longer. The refugees’ memorial stone was consecrated in 1951: „Dedicated to the dead of our homeland and the victims of the war“. In the same year, the community finally erected the mortuary, already planned in 1935. The War Memorial was consecrated in memory of the dead and missing of both world wars and as monument of peace in 1953.

Another extension and redesigning of the cemetery took place in 2000, where also an urn wall was added. It is decorated by an angel sculpture made by Otmar Kleindienst, who created also the fountains of the cemetery.

At the eastern end of the cemetery looms the 19 m high water tower, which was built during the establishment of the „central water supply“ of the village (1928 - 30), replacing the 40 private and 5 public wells. Giebelstadt was connected to the district water supply network in 1966. Thus the massive widely visible symbol of Giebelstadt lost its function as water tower.

Other specials: several classicistic gravestones, the family tomb of the Zobels of Giebelstadt and the priest vault of the catholic parish.
The protestant parish church, originally an independent Franconian church, was first mentioned in records of 1311 on the foundation of a pastoral post by Walter Geyer and Friedrich Zobel of Giebelstadt.

Damaged or destroyed in the Peasant War in 1525, the affiliated church of the Herchsheim parish church received its current baroque exterior in 1673. The Reformation was introduced by the patrons, the Zobel of Giebelstadt in 1601.

The Zobel burial church contains numerous, for the Zobel and Geyer genealogy important tombstones and examples of the epitaph development of the 16th and 17th century. The art-historically most significant work is an epitaph made of marbled wood, the wall-tomb-monument of Amalia Zobel, nee Truchsess of Wetzhausen, a work of the renaissance artist family Becker of Bad Windsheim.

Epitaph of Amalia Zobel of Giebelstadt, nee Truchsess of Wetzhausen, who according to the inscription, contributed a lot to the introduction of the Reformation in Giebelstadt and Herchsheim. The inscription is reporting of Amalia Zobel that she was devoted to the protestantism already from her youth on and eliminated the catholicism from her churches in Giebelstadt and Herchsheim.
Georg Brenck and his son with the same name also created the „Moses pulpit“, which is referred to the preaching of the word of God in the symbolism of its figures and the emphatically „Christ-related“ retabel altar with the dominating, coloured crucifixion group in the arched alcove and the nice Trinity statue above. The interior of the parish church, once consecrated to St. Oswald, is an outstanding example of the altar and pulpit architecture of the late Franconian Renaissance (1614/1615). Due to its rarity it has a special value for art history.

Worth seeing is also the chalice-like, with the donator’s crest decorated font, made by Hans Rappolt of Gaukönigshofen in 1596. Furthermore, the nice baroque organ façade manufactured in the studio of Georg Siegemund Leyser of Rothenburg shortly after 1673.

Among the special jewels counts the late-gothic statue of „John the Baptist“ and a silver chalice, which is fire-plated with gold, as well as a paten. The latter two, which carry the Geyer crest, the donators initials and a circumscription with the name of the donator „Susanna Rosina Geyer of Giebelstadt“ are works of a master of Nuremberg from 1647.

PROTESTANT CHURCH OF GIEBELSTADT
Allersheim is an early Franconian settlement and was first mentioned in records of 1057. Once, it was possession of the Bishop of Eichstätt and his monastery in Monheim. Later, the Bronnbach monastery and the Bishop of Würzburg became lords of the church and the village. The latter enfeoffed the Geyer family of Giebelstadt.

The Renaissance architecture of the church, with its landmark „Echterturm“, indicates the building period of around 1600. The steeple, a choir flanked tower with attached staircase tower shows that the Echter building was erected on the site of a medieval fortified church complex.

Worth seeing are the late-baroque interior, the high altar with the outstanding altarpiece of the church patron saint Walburga and the nice pulpit.

Special jewels are the sculpture of St. Sebastian (by Auwera), the „Plague Column“ (1634) and the very well worked late-gothic Mount of Olives on the outer choir wall.

One kilometre away from the village is the 350-year-old Jewish regional cemetery where 1,600 dead are resting. The cemetery is an impressing testimony of the fate and history of the Jews in the area.
Essfeld, an early Franconian settlement, was first mentioned in records of 820. The ruler of Essfeld was the Bishop of Würzburg who transferred his rights to the Knights Foundation St. Burkhard and his possessions, received from the Counts of Comburg-Rothenburg, to the Neumünster diocese. Following the former castle in the former Comburg part of the village stands a particular jewel with a rich history, the St. Nicholas Chapel with an altarpiece made by the Giebelstadt artist Georg Hanftmann.

In the 13th century, minnesinger Reinmar of Zweter, a pupil of Walther of the Vogelweide lived here and was possibly also buried here.

A special sight is the neo-gothic parish church of Essfeld, constructed in 1895/98 on the site of an earlier Echter church (1573). The St.-Peter and Paul church with its outer architectonical shape and since the successful renovation in 2000/2002 also with its interior, a pure neo-gothic church, belongs to the art historical treasures of the Ochsenfurt region. It is a rare, beautiful example of neo-gothic church architecture.

The steeple of today’s parish church dates from the late Middle Ages. It origin gets impressively proofed by the romanesque tympanum, a vault headstone and the ambulatory.
The beginnings of Euerhausen may for some good reason be dated back to the Carolingian age (around 750). The first records, mentioning the ministry family „of Urhusen“ date from the 13th century.

From the 14th century, the bishops of Würzburg were the lords of the manor and the village, who transferred the tithes, deriving from the possessions of the Lords of Cromburg, to the Neumünster diocese. Among others the Zobel of Giebelstadt had feuds and property in Euerhausen, which they enfeoffed to the Burgraves of Nuremberg. With the extinction of the Zobel of Euerhausen their property fell to the Margraves of Ansbach. The patronage rights received the Zobel family of Giebelstadt-Darstadt after the Zobel’sche property split in the end of the 16th century. They execute them until today.

The current remote steeple, a former gate tower of the fortified church complex, originates from the Middle Ages. Since its reconstruction during the times of Bishop Julius Echter (1595), it has been carrying an octagonal pointed pyramid helmet roof, the feature of churches of this period. Also the heart of today’s parochial church, which was enlarged and received its splendid baroque interior in the 18th century (1730), dates from that age. Georg Sebastian Urlaub created the high altarpiece and at about the same time (1743), Johann Georg Felck of Ochsenfurt the side altarpieces.

The tabernacle was made by Johann Georg Auwera (1764). The ceiling frescos and the Stations of the Cross are the work of the „Painter in Franconia“, Eulogius Böhler (1918). The Euerhausen parish church of St. Nicholas is a jewel amongst the country churches of the Ochsenfurt district.
HERCHSHEIM

Herchsheim, probably an early settlement of the alemannic period, was first officially mentioned in 779 when Count Cuniprecht donated the village to the monastery of Fulda. Herchsheim is the mother parish of Giebelstadt. The village was the joint possession of the Prince-Bishop of Würzburg and the Counts of Hohenlohe. The Prince-Bishop and the Counts of Castell, successors of the Hohenlohe, enfeoffed the Zobel family. The Zobels were the lords and patrons of Herchsheim. The church of St. Georg is a Zobel interment church.

The defiant fortified steeple with its massive cupola surmounted by a lantern, still characterises the silhouette of the village from far and wide. Around 1613, after the introduction of the Reformation, the steeple of the old fortified church was raised and the nave extended. The entrance portal possibly came from the workshop of Michael Kern.

At the same time, the Windsheim family Brenck created the Renaissance-style „Moses pulpit“ and the retabel altar with its Christ-related picture series, the Communion picture in the predella, the crucifixion group in the centre and the Holy Trinity, all surmounted by the risen Christ.

A particular sight is the wonderful baptismal font by Hans Rappolt of Gaukönigshofen (1600) and the very beautiful painting of the patron’s pew and gallery (1775).

The Herchsheim parish church of the counter-reformation age, with its stressed Protestant interior, is an art historical special. Only a few churches have preserved their original exterior and interior design dating from the late Renaissance.
The eventful history of Ingolstadt, first mentioned in 908, is characterised by the lords of the village, the Prince-Bishops of Würzburg and the house Geyer of Giebelstadt-Ingolstadt.

The church of Ingolstadt is a typical country church of Balthasar Neumann, built shortly before his death in 1753. Its well-proportioned single steeple façade incorporate the medieval gate tower of the original fortified church. Its architecture with the gently bent pilaster strips and mouldings indicates already a transition to classicistic forms. The interior is characterised by the lightness of the room, the clarity of the decently balanced proportions and the harmonious relationship of length, width and height.

The rococo high altar with its baldachin-like construction, on both sides flanked or even against the light of the large bright choir window, which was created between 1768 and 1772 by Johann Georg Auwera (1740 - 1823; the grandson of the court sculptor Jakob of the Auwera). The depiction of the Immaculata, the Immaculate Conception, is a popular motive of the baroque period and at the same time a testimony of the deep religious belief of the people and their veneration of the Virgin Maria. A jewel of the high altar are the expressive busts of Joachim and Anna, which are apparently weightlessly carried by the garland-like decorated lateral bridges of the high altar.

The close connection of the Geyers of Giebelstadt with the parish of Ingolstadt is impressively emphasised by the baptismal font, which bears the Geyer family crest (1582) and by the three memorial stones of the Geyer of Giebelstadt on the interior and exterior wall of the Geyer interment church with its widely visible onion-shaped baroque steeple.

The Ingolstadt line of the Geyers died out in 1601 with “the old Geyer of Ingolstadt.”
SULZDORF

Sulzdorf, first officially mentioned in records of 1180, certainly existed already in the „Carolingian Era.“ Since the 12th century until the secularisation, the archdiocese of Würzburg was the patron and lord of the village. Legal jurisdiction over the village was held by the diocesan town of Ochsenfurt, amongst others by the Lord Mayor of the same.

The steeple of the St. Cyriacus church in Sulzdorf with its baroque onion-shaped dome still characterises the outline of the old ecclesiastical village from far and wide. The Sulzdorf parish church is in its heart a post-gothic church of the Echter period, whose current outer appearance was characterised by the major renovation during the baroque period. This is reported by an inscription above the church portal.

Today’s interior, shell limestone mensa, lectern and the tabernacle are nice works of Lothar Forster, an artist of Würzburg. They date from the 80ies of the 20th century, when the liturgy reform of the Church Council (Vaticanum II, 1962 - 1965) was carried out.

Gemgras, a sculptor and „Lord-carver“ of Würzburg also did the Sacred Heart statue, which shows Christ with the stigma. In 1912, the popular artist Eulogius Böhler (1861 - 1943) created the ceiling fresco and the stations of the cross.

Particularly worth visiting is the classicistic pulpit, created around 1800. The outstanding work of an unknown master with four relief medallion is depicting the life of St. Augustinus on the pulpit body and staircase. Well over 30 statues of saints, numerous wayside shrines and crosses still adorn houses, gardens and streets of the old ecclesiastical village of Sulzdorf.

Of particular beauty is the baroque sculpture of St. Michael with his flaming sword and shield (1721) in front of the Fleckenstein property, testifying the deep religious belief and feeling of the people in the beginning of the 18th century.
Unser Strom treibt vieles an – die regionale Wirtschaft genauso wie Ihren Ventilator zu Hause. Nutzen Sie also den N-ERGIE Strom für sich – zu Preisen, die den Vergleich mit anderen Stromanbietern nicht scheuen.

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