



ROTES HAUS
MONSCHAU

GETTING IN TOUCH
WITH WOOLLEN CLOTH
AND A FAMILY DYNASTY
TOUR OF THE EXHIBITION



Photo: © Willi Filz

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the Red House in Monschau!

In the 18th century, Monschau was a **cloth-making** town of great reputation all over Europe. **Fine woollen** fabrics were manufactured here. Hundreds of people were employed in wool processing in the town and its surroundings. Traces of cloth manufacturing can still be found in the town today.

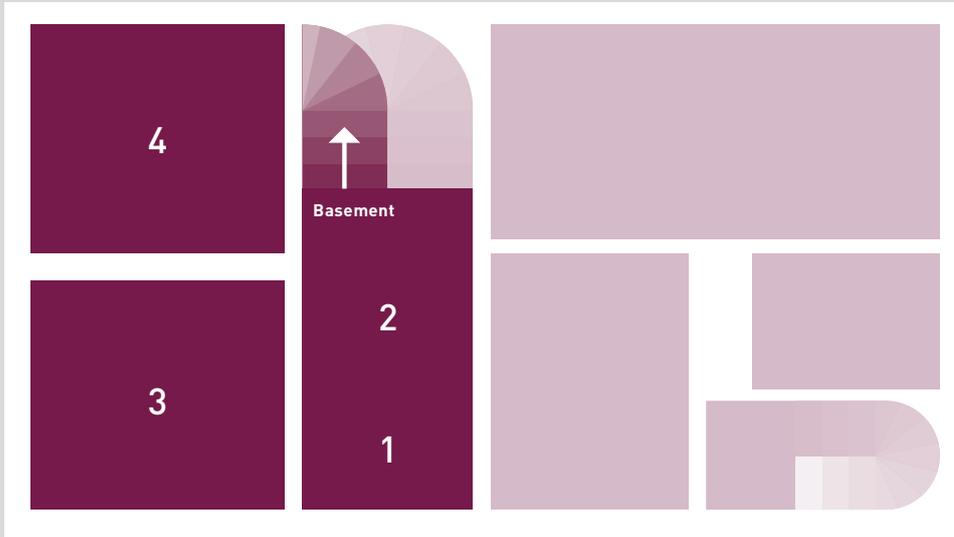
The **Red House** is an impressive monument of this period. It was built around 1760 by the textile manufacturer Johann Heinrich Scheibler for residential and commercial use. The separate entrances "Zum goldenen Helm" and "Zum Pelikan" result from these two different functions. Until the 1830s, the building was the residence, manufacturing site and trading house of three generations of the Scheibler family.

The current **furnishings** originate from later generations of the family, who lived in Cologne and used the house as a holiday home since 1909. These furnishings consisted of family heirlooms and pieces from the art trade.

In 1963, the family decided, together with the regional authority, the Landschaftsverband Rheinland, to turn the Red House into a private foundation. The aim of the **foundation** is to preserve this monument for the future, to develop it as a museum and to make it accessible to the public.

The Red House Museum gives you an insight into the industrialist family's **domestic culture** and tells you how **woollen cloth** was manufactured in Monschau during the 18th century.

Entrance Area and Ground Floor



1 Introduction

3 Master's Room

2 Entrance Hall

4 Dining Room

2ND FLOOR

1ST FLOOR

GROUND FLOOR

BASEMENT

ENTRANCE HALL

We are in the part of the house called "Zum goldenen Helm", in the large, magnificent entrance hall.

With a friendly smile, the first property owner Johann Heinrich Scheibler and his wife Maria Agnes greet us from the **portraits above the sofa**. The large gold-framed mirror, a crystal chandelier and luxurious ceiling stucco provided an impressive welcome for guests and business partners. The **marble on the walls** consists of an elaborate oil painting. It was reconstructed from original findings.

In the corner under the grand staircase, there is a toilet. In the 18th century, such a facility was a great rarity in private houses, the same as the copper hand-washing basin provided.

The focal point of the room is the **self-supporting oak staircase**, which winds over three floors. If you look up through the open eye of the staircase, you can follow its bold construction. The elaborate carvings show typical motifs of the Rococo style. Surrounded by ornamental work, small child figures, so-called putti, can be seen in the banister. In the inner rail, they symbolise the four seasons, the times of day and the elements. In the outer rail, however – and this is unusual –, they portray the different steps in woollen-cloth manufacturing: from herding the sheep to loading the finished bale of cloth. Full of pride, the first property owner here presents his trade, his detailed knowledge of the processes and the foundation of his success

3

MASTER'S ROOM

Now, let's turn to the first room next to the cash desk – the master's room.

Typically furnished with dark furniture, a desk and comfortable seating, it served as the master's study. After dinner, the men retreated here to discuss social issues while consuming tobacco and alcohol. Business partners were also received here.

The **two bronze busts** on the right of the chests of drawers show the donor couple Hans Carl Scheibler and Lotte née Müller. Hans Carl Scheibler had been running his father's Kalk chemical factory in Cologne since 1920. Today, we owe the compilation of the historical interior furnishings to his wife Lotte's intensive commitment.

The eye-catcher in this room is the **canvas** covering of the walls. It shows an illusion painting. 73 copies of old masters' paintings are painted on with frames that look as if they were in the original. Canvas wallpaper was a popular wall decoration in those days and usually showed idealised landscapes. A **fictitious picture cabinet** in this form is unique, however, and is one of the special features of the Red House. Among the 73 copies of old masters are paintings by Titian, Rembrandt, van Ruisdael, Rosalba Carriera and Angelika Kauffmann.

DINING ROOM

Let's move on and enter the dining room.

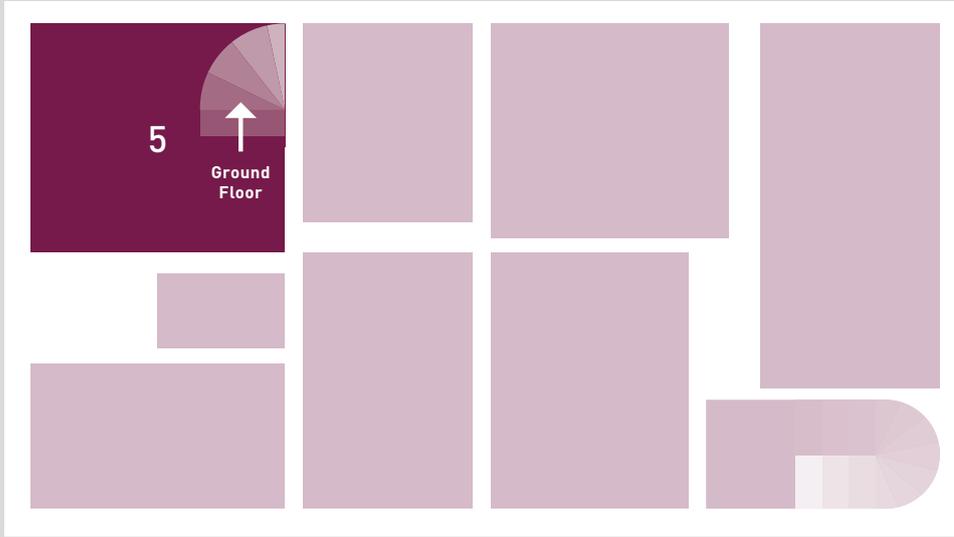
The sumptuous dining room is furnished in the Louis XVI style. This style of furnishing is named after the French king Louis XVI and covers the period from about 1770 to 1795. It is inspired by the French fashion style of the nobility and rich bourgeoisie. Characteristic features are symmetrical forms with discreet tendrils and flower ornaments arranged in garlands. This is how the living rooms of the Red House might have been furnished shortly after they were first used.

The **dark green wall covering** with floral motifs was reconstructed from wallpaper remnants found from the year 1770. Behind the small wooden door in the wall in the left-hand corner is a dumb waiter to the kitchen below. The room is decorated with portraits of members of the Scheibler family.

On the table you can see festive tableware. Carl Scheibler and his wife Lilla had the **service** made for 100 people on the occasion of their silver wedding anniversary in 1909 by the Richard Ginori company in Milan. Each piece shows the coat of arms of the Scheibler family and the House of Mallinckrodt, a merchant family from the Dortmund area.

Let's see where the staff prepared the dishes and now go down the narrow staircase to the cellar.

Basement



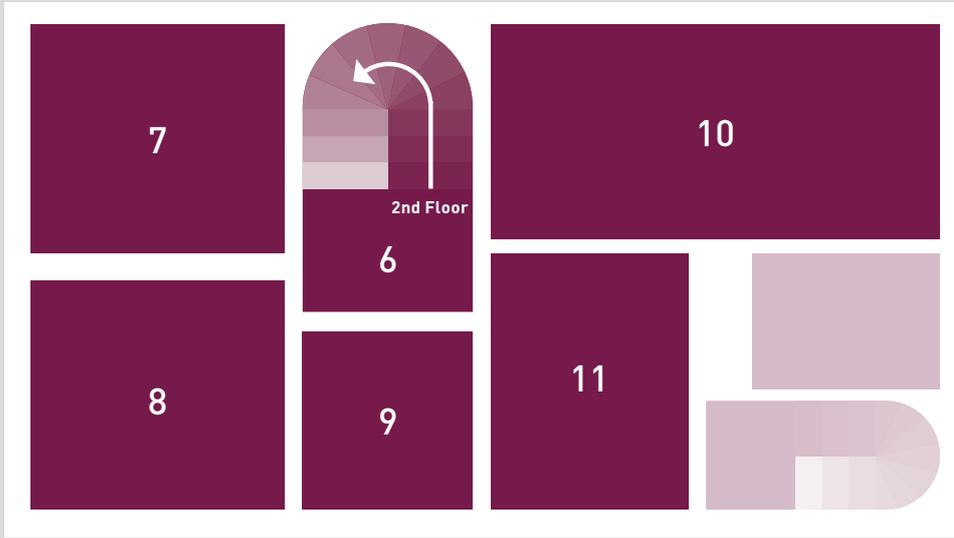
5 Kitchen

The kitchen of the house was the realm of the servants, especially the kitchen maids and cooks. It was also the warmest room in the house because the fire in the large, open fireplace was not allowed to go out. Cookers only became common in the Eifel in the course of the 19th century; therefore, until then, cooking was done over an open fire and hot water was kept there. The **hearth** is representatively framed with bluestone. Behind the fire area, there is a large **cast iron plate** with the Scheibler coat of arms. It stored the heat of the fire and redistributed it into the room. Only rich households could afford the many brightly polished kitchen vessels made of brass and copper. The **dumb waiter's door** to the dining room can be found to the right of the fireplace in the corner. A **floor flap** led to a sewer in the basement. Perhaps it was used for waste disposal.

On the table in front of the window, there is an eye-catching T-shaped **hare roasting pan** made of clay. Before roasting, the hind legs of the hare with the muscle meat were cut off and placed in the upper part, the rest at the bottom. This way, the heat was distributed more evenly. This pan clearly shows that game was quite often on the menu of the upper middle classes. Whereas hunting used to be the privilege of the nobility, factory owners now also went hunting. The Eifel forests and the High Fens with their abundant wildlife offered good opportunities for this activity. Wilhelm Scheibler even owned his own hunting lodge, today's Ternell estate in the High Fens.

Let's now return to the ground floor and go up the grand staircase to the first floor.

1st Floor



6 1st Floor

7 Blue Drawing Room

8 Yellow Drawing Room

9 Cabinet

10 Banquet Hall

11 Anteroom

2ND FLOOR

1ST FLOOR

GROUND FLOOR

BASEMENT

STAIRCASE HALL ON THE 1ST FLOOR

On the first floor, there are living rooms and a banquet hall. Little is known about their original use. They were only furnished in the current style over the course of time. Before you enter the rooms, you should take a look at the **paintings above the doors**, which are connected to the door frames. They show a dreaming shepherd and young couples, who are meant to symbolise the seasons. The paintings were first created in 1911 by the painter Sophie Meyer from Düsseldorf, and they are based on motifs from the 18th century.

Let's now have a look at the first room on the right.

BLUE DRAWING ROOM

In the Blue Drawing Room, there is a striking **open fireplace** made of red marble. Next to it is a passage to the neighbouring room. Since the staircase hall was not heated, one could thus change rooms without opening the door to the cold hallway. Above the mirror of the fireplace, you can see a **painting in black and white shades**, which was created in a technique that imitates stone reliefs. Such paintings were popular in the Baroque period, among others, for decorating Protestant churches. Like all fine-cloth manufacturers in Monschau, the Scheibler family was, incidentally, of Protestant faith and has a long line of ancestors who were outstanding theologians.

On the table, there is a **coffee pot**, a so-called Bergische "Dröppelmina" made of copper and brass. The coffee, which in those days used to be an unfiltered infusion of ground

beans and boiling water, was poured into cups through the small tap. The spout was easily clogged by the powder, dripped, then just "dröppelte" or trickled out and had to be cleaned again and again with a quill. Coffee was a luxury drink in the 18th century and partly banned in some states. It was imported by sea from European colonies in Southeast Asia and South America.

This is also illustrated by the **painting** of Wilhelm Scheibler, one of Johann Heinrich's sons, and his wife Theresia Elisabeth Böcking. They had themselves portrayed, presumably while drinking coffee, and thus demonstrate their luxurious lifestyle. Poorer people, however, had to be content with coffee substitutes made from acorns, dandelion or chicory roots.

Now you are welcome to enter the adjoining living room.

YELLOW DRAWING ROOM

The Yellow Drawing Room is also furnished with exquisite furniture. To the left of the window, you will notice the **secretaire** with its rich carving and wavy drawers. It probably comes from a workshop in Aachen. Particularly noteworthy is the **tray table** next to the entrance. It is a typical piece of furniture from the Rococo period, made by the Van Selow manufactory in Brunswick. Nowadays, furniture from this manufactory possesses a rarity value. The glass bead motifs are a typical feature. Such tables were used in the upper classes to take tea. Tea, like coffee, was a luxury drink and was usually drunk in company, for example on visits or similar occasions.

The large two-door **linen wardrobe** is part of the original furnishings of the house. On its top frame, it shows the carved coat of arms of the Scheibler-Böcking family. It was probably made in 1766. This wardrobe was used to store the dowry that Theresia Elisabeth Böcking brought from her parental home when she married Wilhelm Scheibler. As dowries, young women usually contributed table and bed linen as well as linen fabric, which they later used to sew household textiles. Years before the wedding, they already wove linen for this purpose, and they sewed and embroidered tablecloths and bed sheets. This peasant tradition was apparently also common among the upper classes.

Let's now turn to the small room, the so-called Cabinet, with the painting of the dreamy shepherd-boy above the door.

CABINET

The Cabinet is one of the most unusual rooms in the Red House. The walls are adorned with another **precious canvas covering**. A forest landscape is painted on it, surrounded by garlands of flowers. It mainly depicts hunting scenes with various animals such as hunting dogs, big cats and chicken birds, but you can also see a fisher-boy and garden tools. Lots of flowers in baskets and vases create a romantic and playful scene.

The **carved wooden panels** in the lower part of the walls are also highly elaborate. On the left side, they show musical instruments in various concert combinations, and next to them, there are theatre sceneries with weapons, armour and cannonballs. The room may have been used as a ladies' room to which one retreated in a small circle.

On the table, you can see a **wooden reel**. This device was used to wind the spun yarn from the bobbins of the spinning wheel. After that, it could be taken off and stored as a hank of yarn. The large wardrobe in the Yellow Drawing Room, where the household linen was stored, shows that the ladies of the upper class were also occupied with the production of yarn and other handicrafts; the sewing basket is also evidence of this. Together, the ladies spun, embroidered, made bobbin lace and sewed. Of course, handicrafts were part of the education of girls and young women of the upper class and the nobility in the 18th and still in the 19th century.

*When we pass through the next door,
it will be the first time we enter the part
of the house called "Zum Pelikan".*



The largest room in the entire house is the banquet hall. It is modestly furnished and very bright due to the large window front facing east towards the Rur river and south towards the Laufenbach brook. Most striking are the marble-framed **open fireplace**, the elaborately stuccoed ceiling and the inlaid **parquet flooring**. The **sofa** and chairs are originals from around 1780. Next to the entrance, there hangs a **portrait** of Wilhelm Scheibler with his wife Theresia Elisabeth Böcking and their little daughter Maria Henriette, who was born in 1767.

The banquet hall was used for family celebrations and receptions. Musical afternoons or evenings were also important here. In the upper classes, it was good manners for children to learn to play musical instruments and to perform their skills for

guests. Moreover, the cloth-maker families liked to invite each other in turn and to hire musicians for concerts.

While you are in the banquet hall, you should look up at the beautiful, **stuccoed ceiling**. Stucco is a decorative element made of mortar, which has a special composition of gypsum, lime and binding agents. It is applied by specialised craftsmen, the stucco artists. The embellishment of ceilings with stucco was particularly popular in the Baroque and Rococo periods, which were the 17th and 18th centuries. With its elaborate ornaments, the decorative stucco in the banquet hall proves that this was the work of very skilful and professional masters. Except for the kitchen, all the living rooms in the Red House have stucco ceilings.

The smaller anteroom or drawing room adjoins the banquet hall.

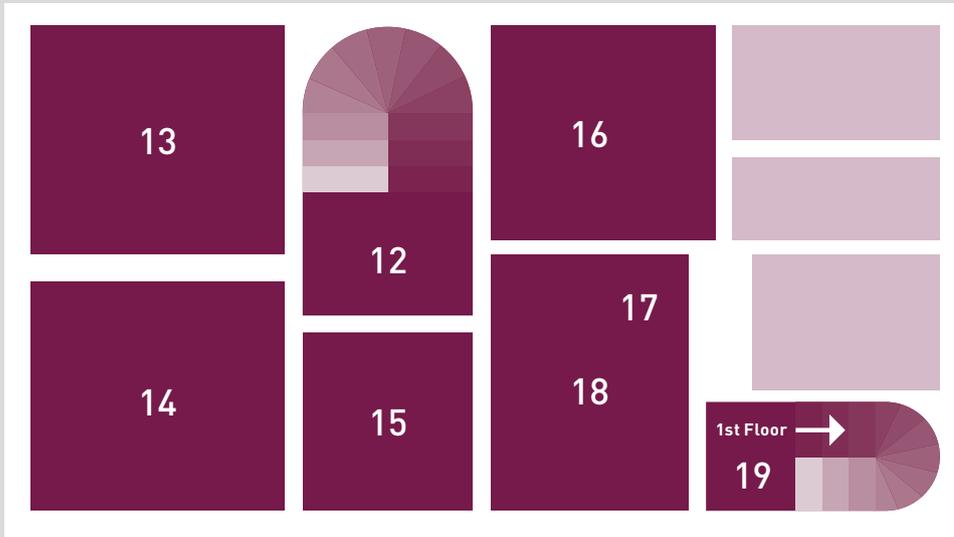
Here, on the left, there is a special **display cabinet** for porcelain. The decorative elements are more discreet than in other cabinets of this kind in the Red House. However, they are typical of the time of origin, around 1770, which was the transition from the Rococo to the Louis XVI style. The cabinet probably originates from a workshop in Liège or Aachen. It has a **built-in pendulum clock** that even has a second hand. This shows the great importance of modern chronometry in the manufacturing families. In the 18th century, most people still orientated themselves by the position of the sun and the church bells. This was to change in the age of machinery that was about to dawn.

The function of the drawing room is not known for certain. Perhaps the guests retreated here for undisturbed conversations and chats.

The room also contains a **set of seats** from around 1780, covered with cloth depicting figures, animals and hunting scenes. These covers, like the carpet, come from Aubusson, a small town in central France. Since the 15th century, tapestries have been manufactured there. The world-famous workshops, some of which still exist today, work to order. They provide clear evidence of the Europe-wide contacts that the upper class of those days cultivated, not only through their companies, but also when it came to private consumption.

Now, let's go up to the second floor.

2nd Floor



12 Staircase Hall

15 Green Bedroom

18 Hous

13 Empire Bedroom

16 Böcking Bedroom

19 Small Staircase

14 Rokoko Bedroom

17 Family

2ND FLOOR

1ST FLOOR

GROUND FLOOR

BASEMENT

STAIRCASE HALL ON THE 2ND FLOOR

On the second floor, you will find four furnished bedrooms.

In the hallway in the staircase hall, there is a **display cabinet**. Just take a look through the glass doors. Inside, you can see various objects such as a parasol, travel utensils, scent bottles and, above all, a **tuning fork and a circular object** with a metal hook. The latter two objects were created by Johann Heinrich Scheibler, a grandson of the same-named first property owner of the Red House. **Portraits** of him and his wife hang to the right of the display case. He was the founder of the Scheibler and Compagnon velvet and silk manufactory in Krefeld. In his spare time, he devoted himself to music and invented the tonometer for tuning musical instruments as well as a kind of harmonica consisting of differently tuned Jew's harps, so-called "Brummeisen".

The staircase further up is closed to guests and leads to the Scheibler family's private rooms.

EMPIRE BEDROOM

Next to the staircase, you look into the so-called Empire Bedroom.

The name refers to the style of living. It was quite fashionable from about 1800 to 1815, especially in France during the reign of Napoleon Bonaparte. At that time, the part of the Rhineland on the left bank of the Rhine, including the Monschau region, was under French administration. Important features are straight, simple, classical forms such as columns, but also motifs and ornaments from Greek and Roman antiquity. You can find such elements on the bed, the chests of drawers and the bedside cabinets. The **paintings** portray the third and fourth generations of the family, and the portraits next to the bed show the Krefeld line of the Scheibler family. The **cube parquet flooring** is an original from around 1800.

The jewel of the room is the **four-poster bed** with a curtain, called a canopy, made of light silk. Although it is no wider than 1.20 metres, it is a bed for two people. Such narrow double beds were quite common at that time. As there was no heating in the bedroom, people snuggled up close to each other. Obese people certainly had their problems. It was not until around 1900 that larger beds with a width of 1.40 to 1.60 metres became fashionable in France and England. In Germany, however, the beds were made narrower and two were placed next to each other.

ROKOKO BEDROOM

The so-called Rococo Bedroom is more simply furnished in comparison with the neighbouring room. The room is furnished as a parents' and children's bedroom. Here, two beds are put together to form a double bed. A large **bed warming pan** made of brass leans against the bed. People used to fill it with hot charcoal and rub it over the bed to warm it up before going to bed. In front of it stands a **cradle**, and on the opposite side, there is a **baby's high chair**. On the **make-up table** on the left stands a toy horse. On the right, on the chest of drawers from Liège, you can see two **shaving bowls**.

In earlier centuries, it was quite common for parents and younger children to share one bedroom. The older children, separated by gender, slept together in one chamber in one bed. In bourgeois households in the Rhineland, a separate children's room only appeared in the course of the 19th century.

In front of the bed, there is a piece of furniture that seems unusual at first glance: a **bidet**. It is a low washbasin for intimate hygiene. Around 1700, this washbasin appeared in French aristocratic houses and among the upper middle classes, and it was certainly a luxury item. Women in particular used the bidet for hygiene in connection with menstruation or after childbirth. Otherwise, it was also useful after going to the toilet, especially at a time when toilet paper was not yet known. Some people also believed that they could prevent pregnancy by washing after sexual intercourse.

GREEN BEDROOM

At first glance, the small bedroom decorated in a green hue appears quite simple. Nevertheless, it is furnished with valuable and selected furniture. The furniture dates from around 1770, the transition from the ornate Rococo to the more delicate Louis XVI style. The large **cabinet** on the left shows carvings with a basket of flowers, musical instruments and garlands. Above the bed, you can see a **picture of a shepherd scene** integrated into the wall. Pictures like this were very popular at the end of the 18th century.

To the right of the bed, you can see a chest of drawers with a **silver set of washing utensils**. There is also a **towel rail** in the room. In the 18th century, you will have looked in vain for a bathroom in the homes of the middle classes and even in larger castles. Hygiene in the modern sense did not exist. A small wash with a little water had to be sufficient. Very rarely,

people allowed themselves a bath in a larger washtub. More attention was paid to make-up. For the necessary small or big "business", chamber pots were used, which the servants usually disposed of in the morning, either on dung heaps or in the river.

BÖCKING BEDROOM

The so-called Böcking Bedroom in the "Zum Pelikan" part of the house is named after the parents of Theresia Elisabeth, Wilhelm Scheibler's wife. Their portraits hang above the bed. Their baroque villa on the Moselle is furnished in a similar way to the Red House, and it is also a museum today. The furniture in this room was only brought into the house after 1900.

What particularly catches the eye is the valuable **clock** made by the clockmaker Kritz from Monschau in the mid-19th century, who later emigrated to St. Petersburg. It has two dials with information on the month, day of the week, phases of the moon and two figures showing the appropriate constellation on an astronomical sphere. On the floor, there is a **copper vessel** for filling up the water jugs in the different rooms.

Next to the clock, there are **two oil lamps**. Such lamps, together with candlesticks and candle holders hanging from the ceiling, were the only light sources in the house in the 18th century. One can imagine that after sunset the houses were almost completely dark inside. This was a burden especially for older people with poor eyesight. For this reason, people went to bed early. Besides, open indoor fires always posed the danger of a fire. Devastating town fires also occurred in Monschau.

We don't go back to the staircase hall but turn to the next room.

We now enter the thematic area of the exhibition that introduces the Scheibler family and cloth manufacturing, the basis of their wealth.

First, there are the pictures of members of the Protestant Offermann and Scheibler families. Their kinship relations are illustrated by painted ribbons between the portraits. Johann Heinrich Scheibler, the first property owner of the Red House and founder of the Scheibler family dynasty in Monschau, can be seen in the middle on the right-hand side. He was related by marriage to the local Protestant cloth-maker families Schlösser, Schmitz and Offermann. Family ties were very important at that time. In the predominantly Catholic Eifel, the members of the Protestant upper class of fine-cloth manufacturers married among themselves. Consequently, they were not only connected economically, but also through family ties.

In the middle of the room, you can see a model of the Red House.

The Red House was constructed as a residential and manufacturing building. The exact construction time is not known, but it must have been between 1762 and 1766. The first property owner, Johann Heinrich Scheibler, did not live to see the completion of the building.

The building has a residential area, which you enter through the entrance "Zum goldenen Helm" and which you have already seen. It is marked in green in the model. The second area with the entrance "Zum Pelikan" leading to the manufacturing and business premises is marked in red in the model. On the top floor, in the attic, there was the wool depot. The bales of wool were pulled up with a winch attached to the side of the house.

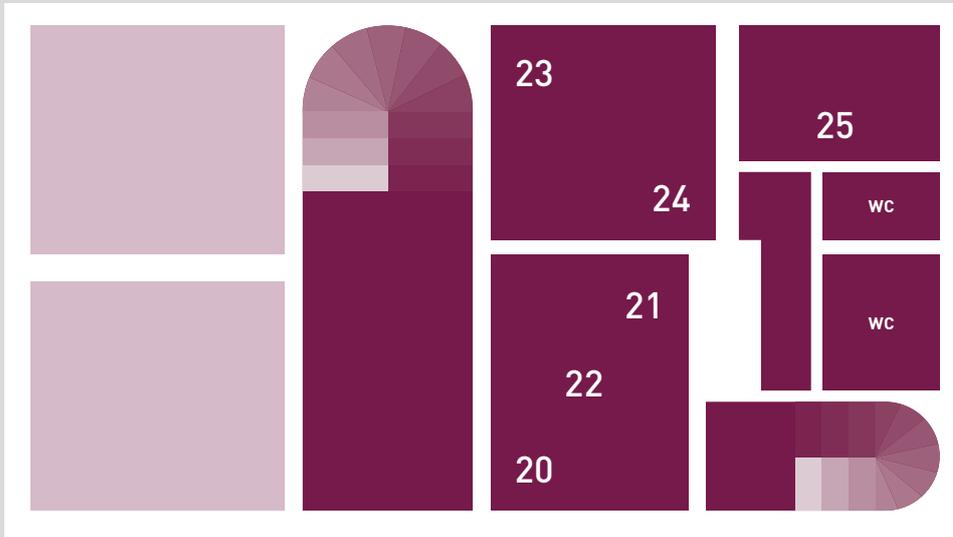
For further processing, the wool was thrown down a chute into the cellar. There were copper boilers for scouring and washing the wool as well as water basins and channels for subsequent rinsing (see drawer). This part of the house also had offices and a cloth bale depot.

SMALL STAIRCASE

Now, let's go through the next door to the staircase hall in the part of the house called "Zum Pelikan" and go down to the ground floor.

The staircase hall and the staircase are narrower than in the former residential part of the house. But this staircase is also richly decorated with carvings. It was probably made at the same time and in the same workshop as its counterpart in the other part of the house, "Zum goldenen Helm". It also has picture panels. On the left side in the railing, next to Adam and Eve at the apple tree, you can see the twelve months symbolised by field work. Up here at the end, Death is sitting beside a couple in love. Opposite, there are representations of the four seasons. Historical photos prove that this staircase used to have a marble painting similar to the one that can still be seen in the large entrance hall in the other part of the house.

Ground Floor und Exit Area



20 Stages of Work

21 Places of Work

22 Cloths

23 Fashion and Patterns

24 Trade Routes

25 Monschau – Pictures from 200 Years

STAGES OF WORK

On the long wall behind the table with the cloth patterns, you can see, from left to right, illustrations and objects relating to the most important stages of cloth manufacturing. The display cases show the stages of processing from raw wool to finished cloth.

Washing

The pre-treated wool from merino sheep in Spain and Saxony was brought to Monschau in large bales. By adding urine and hot water, it was scoured in boilers, washed and then rinsed in baskets in running water.

Dyeing and drying

In Monschau, much of the wool was then dyed, dried on frames and beaten into flocks on tables.

Carding

The wool flocks were now carded or scribbled as follows. The individual fibres were combed into a parallel shape using brushes with small metal hooks. Then they were lightly greased with olive oil to facilitate the spinning process.

Spinning

After that, usually women spun the wool into yarn on hand-operated spindle wheels.

Warping and weaving

Now the warping took place. According to the specifications of the manufacturer, weavers made a warp, this means the parallel threads of the same length, which were stretched on the loom. The weft yarn was wound onto small bobbins and the cloth was woven according to the manufacturer's exact specifications.

Fulling and stretching

After weaving, there was the finishing process:

first the cloth was taken to the fulling mill, where large wooden hammers pounded it in soapsuds, thus felting it. Outdoors, the heavily shrunk cloth was spread out on large frames, stretched and left to dry.

Teasing

Workers then teased the still slightly damp cloth with hand-carders, in which dried flower heads of teasels were clamped, in order to raise the wool hairs.

Cloth shearing

Then came the lengthiest process: the surface of the cloth was sheared millimetre by millimetre with heavy cloth shears so that it was smooth and even.

These finishing processes had to be repeated several times to obtain a fine woolen cloth.

Singeing and pressing

After singeing, pressing and packing, the cloth was ready for sale.

The transformation from raw wool to finished cloth could take up to two years.

In the course of the 18th century, the number of workers in Monschau and the surrounding area was no longer sufficient for the textile manufactories in Monschau. Therefore, the manufacturers began to delegate some stages of work to homeworkers. These included weaving simple patterns and, above all, spinning. For the work of a weaver, at least six to eight female spinners had to produce yarn. They received the carded wool and then delivered the yarn. Afterwards, the manufacturer gave the yarn to weavers with instructions about the pattern. Especially in the Limburg region and Wallonia, a system of small entrepreneurs known as "Baasen" (baases) became established. They were one kind of subcontractors, had their own workshops or employed homeworkers themselves. They received the wool from Monschau and then delivered the finished fabric back there.

In Monschau, the manufacturers had fulling mills and their own workshops, so-called "Winkel" (recesses). There they employed dyers, weavers for special patterns, warpers, pressers and other workers. Around 1770, a total of 5,400 people from the local and wider area worked for Monschau's fine cloth manufacturers.

Let us now turn to the cloths on the table.

Here you can see several cloth patterns that were reconstructed by the hand weaver Christoph Erhardt according to original designs from historical pattern books of the Scheibler company. The difficulty was not only in understanding and reconstructing the weaving patterns, but above all in the surface treatment, the finishing of the fabrics. Several experiments were necessary to achieve this.

First of all, you can see three different weaving patterns (red fabrics) that were typical of Scheibler: striped, dotted and mottled. Next to them are blue / violet fabrics in various stages of finishing: directly after weaving, after fulling and after shearing.

You are welcome to touch the cloths and to feel their quality.

For a long time, only single-coloured woollen cloths were produced in Monschau. Johann Heinrich Scheibler was one of the first fine-cloth manufacturers to produce patterned woollen cloths around 1740.

They matched the playful and very colourful fashion of the Rococo period. Such "mottled" fabrics made of mixed-coloured yarns, fabrics with stripes or fine dots were used for waistcoats and other outer garments, but also for harem cloths. The preserved pattern books for trade fairs show a great wealth of colours and patterns. And yet all were made purely by hand with natural dyes.

At the end of the 18th century, fashion changed again with a trend towards simpler, often one-coloured fabrics, as the examples from the "Journal of Luxury and Fashion" in the projection show. Even then, producers had to react as quickly as possible to changes in fashion in order to survive on the market.

TRADE ROUTES

Around 1800, the Johann Heinrich Scheibler & Söhne company had extensive trade relations in Europe and beyond. In some places, the company had its own branches and small trading houses. In many cases, the Scheibler company also bought raw materials from or sold cloth to other merchants with whom it had close ties. The sales market extended as far as Russia and Asia Minor. One of the most important trade fairs was in Frankfurt.

Raw materials such as merino wool, olive oil, teasels, dyes or soap mostly came from Spain, southern France and Italy. Finished cloth was exported by land or sea as far as St. Petersburg or the Levant (today's Turkey). As the routes were rather poor and the carriages were always stopped at customs stations, the sea route or transport by river was preferred. The duration of the transports is indicated on the map as an estimate. In winter or in bad weather, the transport could take much longer.

MONSCHAU – PICTURES FROM 200 YEARS

Monschau was first mentioned in 1198. After the construction of the castle by the dukes of Limburg, a small farming town developed below it from the 14th century onwards. In addition to agriculture, the inhabitants also plied their trade, among other things as cloth makers. With the establishment of fine-cloth manufacturing, the town's economy began to flourish.

The heyday (1740 to 1815):

In the 18th century, handicraft cloth production reached its heyday in Monschau. This eventually brought many people into the town. In 1767, Monschau had 2,108 inhabitants. By 1800, there was hardly enough room for the rapidly growing population, which by 1816 numbered 3,020. Some of the earliest views of the town date from 1766, showing the castle and the densely built-up town with its terraces for spreading and stretching the pieces of cloth.

The industrialisation (1815 to 1880):

In the middle of the 19th century, woollen cloth was increasingly produced on machines in factories. 94 factory buildings were counted in the town. The water of the Rur was used for water wheels to drive the machines, as well as for dyeing, washing

clothes or as a sewer. The hygienic conditions and the living conditions were partly catastrophic.

The decline (1880 to 1920):

Monschau's connection to the railway in 1885 came too late for the woollen-cloth production. Moreover, it was hardly possible to expand the factories in the narrow Rur valley. In 1908, the last woollen-cloth factory closed down. For a while, other textile companies still existed in the town, such as the silk factory or shoddy wool factories. The population dropped rapidly to 1,865 in 1905, but the railway also brought the first tourists into the town. Soon painters and photographers discovered the romantic-looking townscape.

Tourism (1920 to the present):

In the Second World War, Monschau was largely spared destruction, unlike the surrounding villages. The last textile factories closed in the 1960s. The district administration, secondary schools and, above all, tourism now provided jobs. More and more car traffic crowded the narrow streets. Souvenir shops started to replace shops for daily needs. Monschau gradually became a tourist attraction. Today, there are more than 300 historical buildings in the old part of the town.

MUSEUM ROTES HAUS MONSCHAU

Laufenstraße 10
52156 Monschau
Phone: 02472 5071
info@rotes-haus-monschau.de

www.rotes-haus-monschau.de